GOODNIGHT
PUNPUN
1
INIO ASANO

GOODNIGHT PUNPUN

1

Story and Art by INIO ASANO

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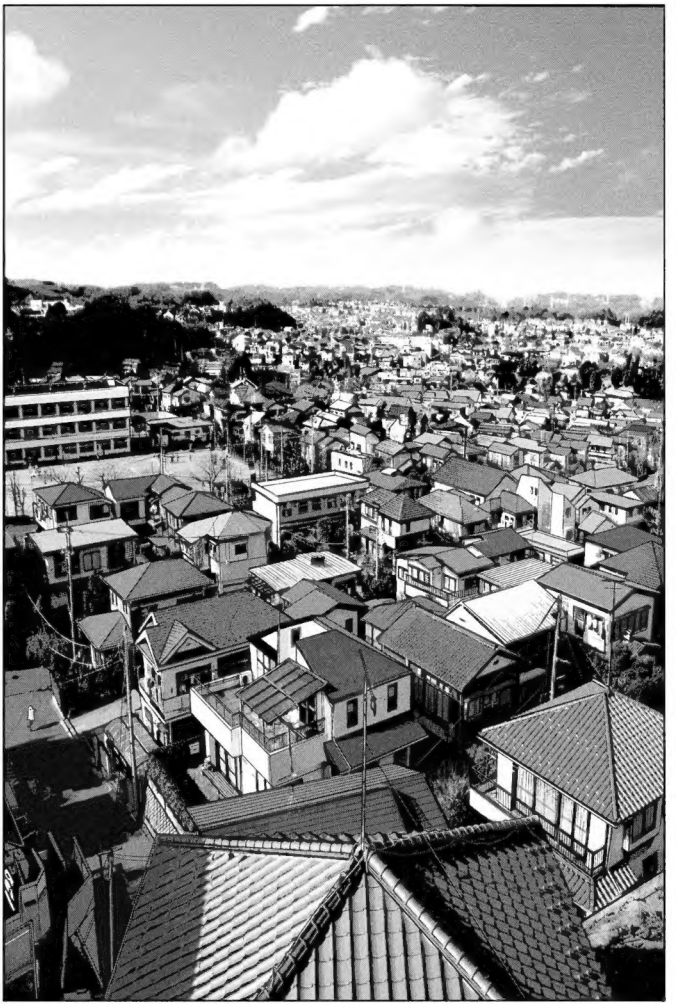
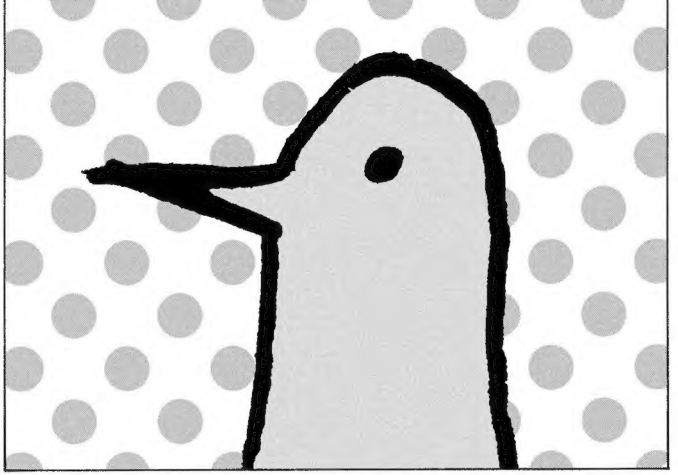


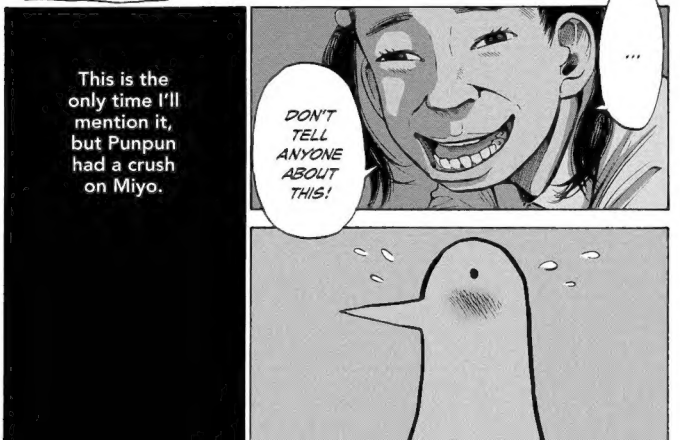
Chapter 1



Today, Punpun was terribly depressed about going to school...

CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
Miyo!

Punpun's earliest memory of Miyo was from a year ago.
On his way home from school, he saw her shoving pebbles into the mouth of Yoshikawa, the constant target of bullies.


This is the only time I'll mention it, but Punpun had a crush on Miyo.
...
DON'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT THIS!

Monday without Miyo would be unbearably boring!
HEY, DO YOU GUYS KNOW ABOUT SEX?
WHAT? DID YOU JUST SAY SEX?!
SHH! NOT SO LOUD!
I'M NOT TELLING YOU, KOMATSU!
PUNPUN, DO YOU KNOW...?
SEE...
...A BOY PUTS HIS THING IN HIS GIRLFRIEND'S THING...
DON'T LOOK SO SHOCKED.

OKAY, OKAY!
CLAP
CLAP
EVERYONE, TAKE YOUR SEATS!
YOUR CLASSMATE MIYO OHTA TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER SCHOOL LAST WEEK...
...AND NOW WE HAVE A NEW FRIEND! LET'S MEET HER.

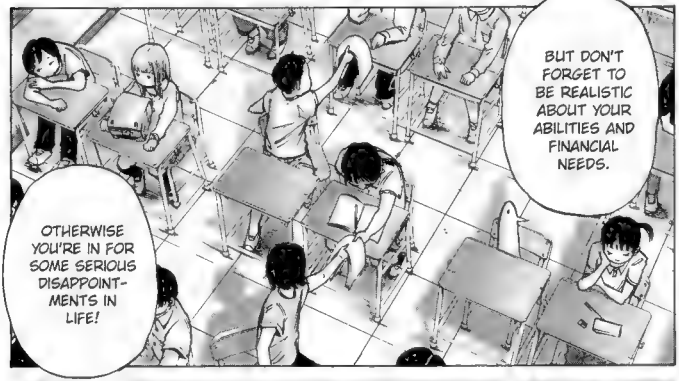
Today's Helper: Haruno

I'M FROM NERIMA PREFEC-TURE...
...AND MY NAME IS AIKO TANAKA.

It was love at first sight.

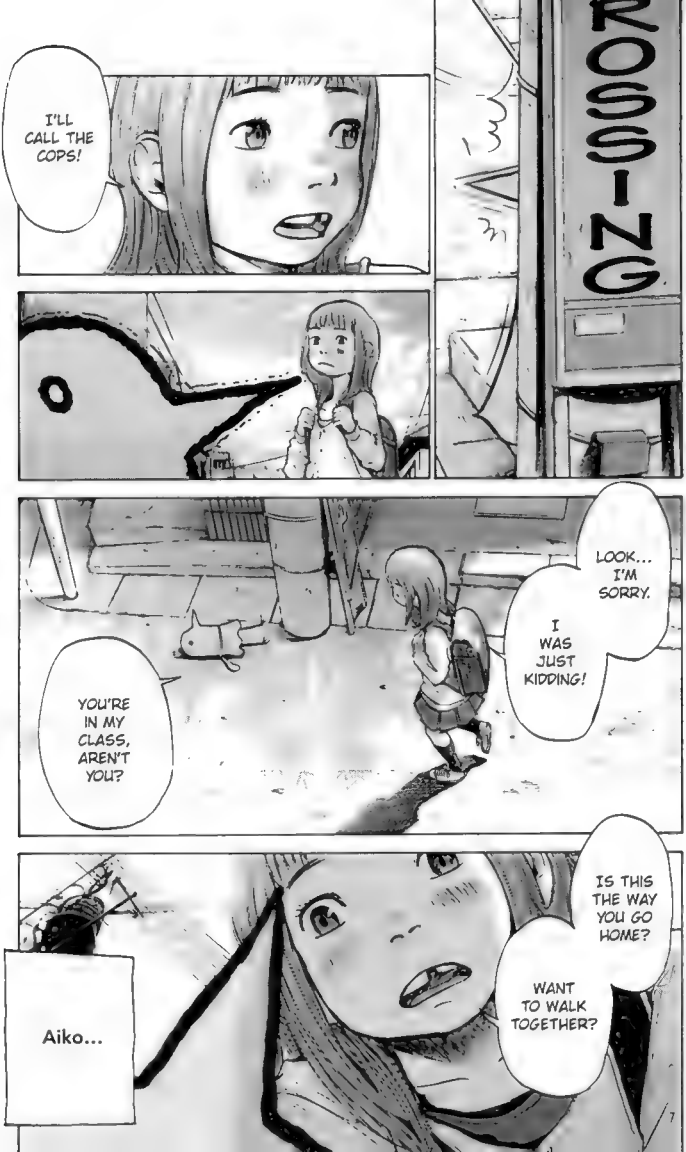
WAH HA HA!
ヘヘヘ
ヘヘヘ
PSYCH!
OKAY, NOW THAT YOU'VE MET THE NEW STUDENT ...
Huh?
...IT'S TEST TIME!
Huh?
WRITE AN ESSAY INTRODUCING YOURSELF AND TELLING ME ABOUT YOUR DREAMS FOR THE FUTURE.
IF YOU DON'T FINISH IN CLASS, IT'S HOMEWORK FOR TOMORROW.

AND I DON'T MEAN JUST CAREER GOALS...
WHAT *STUFF* DO YOU WANT TO DO WHEN YOU GROW UP? YOU ALL HAVE *SOMETHING* YOU WANT TO DO, RIGHT?
DREAM BIG, EVERYONE!
BECAUSE DREAMS ARE FREE!


BUT DON'T FORGET TO BE REALISTIC ABOUT YOUR ABILITIES AND FINANCIAL NEEDS.
OTHERWISE YOU'RE IN FOR SOME SERIOUS DISAPPOINT-MENTS IN LIFE!

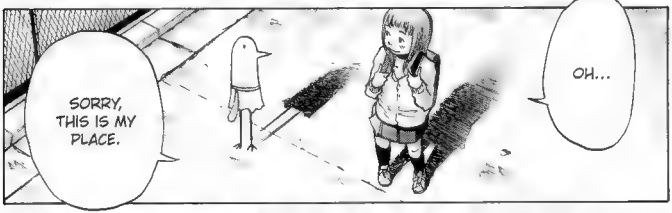
BING
BONG
BING
BONG

Hee hee hee!
Ha ha ha!
Bye-bye!
Bye
Bye-bye!
HEY, YOU...
WHY ARE YOU FOLLOWING ME?

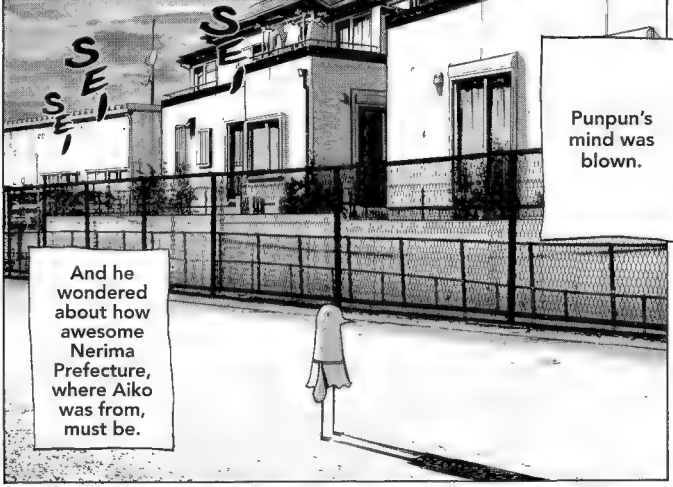

I'LL CALL THE COPS!
ROSSING
LOOK... I'M SORRY.
I WAS JUST KIDDING!
YOU'RE IN MY CLASS, AREN'T YOU?
IS THIS THE WAY YOU GO HOME?
WANT TO WALK TOGETHER?
Aiko...

...smelled very nice.
DID YOU FINISH YOUR ESSAY, PUNPUN?
I FINISHED MINE LIKE *THAT*!
BECAUSE I'M GOING TO BE AN ACTRESS, A SINGER OR A MODEL!
HEY, DID YOU KNOW...
...IN A FEW YEARS WE'LL RUN OUT OF OIL, THE ENVIRONMENT WILL BE DESTROYED AND EARTH WILL BE UNINHABITABLE?
UNLESS WE ALL MOVE TO ANOTHER PLANET, IT'LL BE OVER FOR HUMANITY.
DID YOU KNOW THAT?!

MY DAD'S TRYING HIS BEST TO SURVIVE...
...BUT WHEN IT'S OVER, IT'S OVER.
THAT'S WHY I WANT TO DO EVERYTHING IN MY TEENS, SAVE UP MY MONEY AND BLOW IT ALL WHEN I'M IN MY TWENTIES!

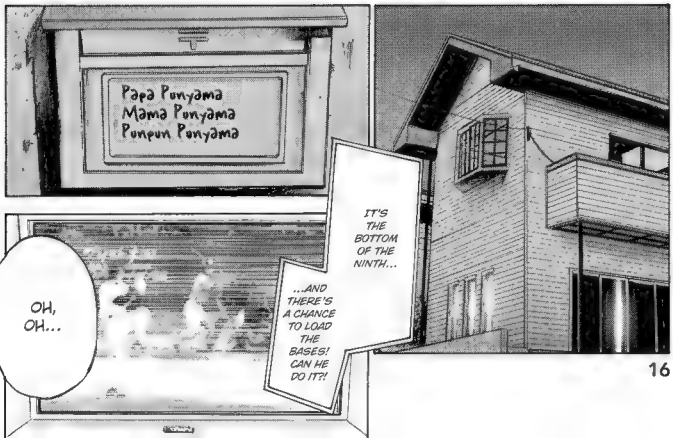

OH...
SORRY, THIS IS MY PLACE.

SEI
SEI
SEI
NEW MEMBERS WANTED
SEI
SEI
SEI
SEI
COSMO HEALTH CENTER
SEE YOU TOMOR-ROW!



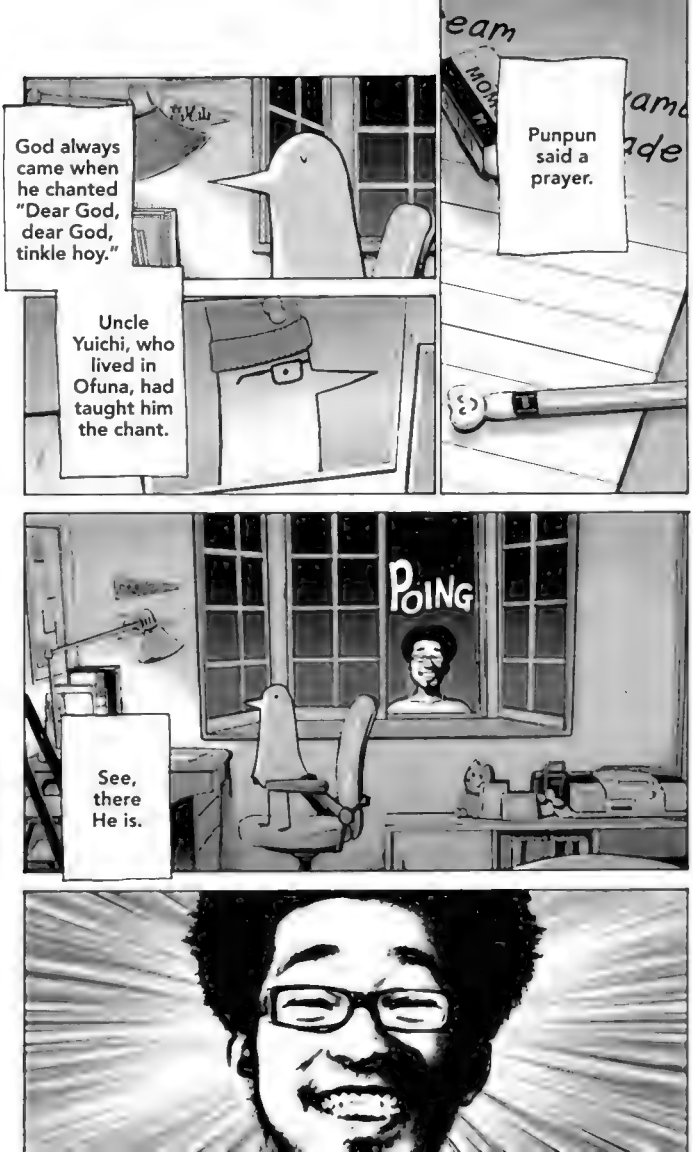
But he fought back the tears.

And as he pondered the kind of adult he would grow up to be, Punpun forgot the way home and almost started to cry.

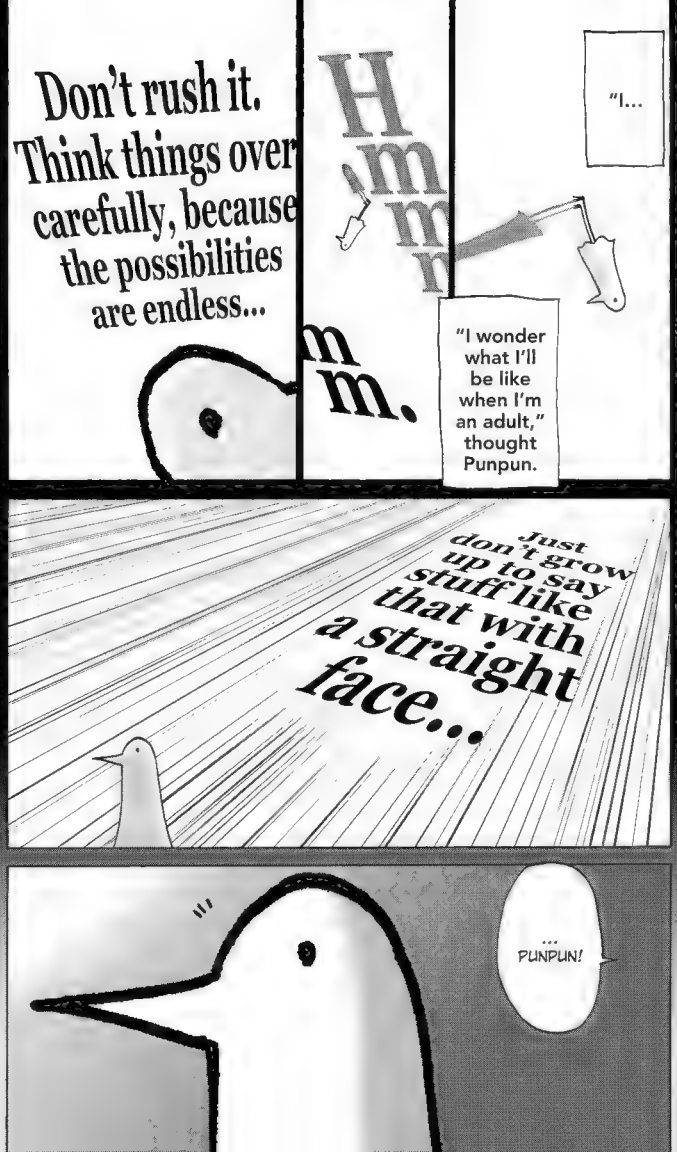

Papa Punyama
Mama Punyama
Punpun Punyama
IT'S THE BOTTOM OF THE NINTH...
...AND THERE'S A CHANCE TO LOAD THE BASES! CAN HE DO IT?!
OH, OH...

YES!
RUN! RUN!
IT'S A HIT!
Punpun's dream was to play pro baseball.
He had never actually played baseball before, but it made Punpun feel good to see his father enjoying the live broadcasts.
NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL A VICTORY FOR THE GIANTS!
But sometimes Punpun found himself questioning whether that really meant he wanted to play baseball.
MAMA, GET ME A BEER!
OH, WE'RE OUT.
A GAME LIKE THAT...
...MAKES ME WANT TO HIT A HOME RUN IN BED TONIGHT!
OUT...
HOW CAN WE BE OUT, YOU IDIOT?!

I KNOW WE HAVE BEER IN THE FRIDGE!
SO GET ME A BEER, BITCH!
CRASH
THAT BEER WAS PAID FOR WITH MONEY I EARNED!
AHHHH!
BUT, DEAR, YOU'VE BEEN UN-EMPLOYED FOR A YEAR!
YOU'VE ALREADY HAD YOUR BEER QUOTA FOR THE NIGHT!
THAT ...
THAT'S ...
... BECAUSE ...
...I COULDN'T ...
...TRANSFER AND LEAVE YOU GUYS!
WHAM
YOU'RE MY WIFE! YOU SHOULD BE MORE SYMPATHETIC!
I DIDN'T THINK THEY'D FIRE ME FOR SAYING NO!
I DID IT FOR YOU!!
Punpun was used to days like these.


God always came when he chanted "Dear God, dear God, tinkle hoy."
Uncle Yuichi, who lived in Ofuna, had taught him the chant.
Punpun said a prayer.
POING
See, there He is.

What do you want from God, Punpun?
Punpun asked God...
"Can't Mom and Dad get along?"
Frankly, I'm tired of that subject. Is there anything else?


Don't rush it. Think things over carefully, because the possibilities are endless...
mm.
Hmmm
"I...
"I wonder what I'll be like when I'm an adult," thought Punpun.
Just don't grow up to say stuff like that with a straight face...
...PUNPUN!

OH, I'M SORRY. ARE YOU STUDYING?
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
LOOK, I HAVE A PRESENT FOR YOU, PUNPUN.
IT'S A TELE-SCOPE!
ISN'T IT GREAT ?!
I WON IT PLAYING THE SLO–
I MEAN, A FRIEND GAVE IT TO ME.
NO MATTER HOW FAR AWAY IT IS, EVERY-THING ...LOOKS WITHIN REACH THROUGH THIS, YOU KNOW?

THIS IS AROUND THE TIME... YES! LOOK, SEE THAT TRIANGLE IN THE EASTERN SKY?
THE STAR AT THE VERY TOP IS VEGA, IN THE LYRA CONSTELLATION.
VEGA IS 27 LIGHT-YEARS AWAY FROM EARTH.
IN OTHER WORDS, YOU'RE SEEING LIGHT FROM 27 YEARS AGO.
HMM? CAN YOU SEE NERIMA WITH THIS?
NAH, IT'S PROBABLY TOO CLOSE.
ANYWAY, A MAN'S GOT TO DREAM BIG!
I'LL NEVER GO TO OUTER SPACE.
BUT DREAMING ABOUT IT IS GREAT!

"That's it. I'll study outer space."

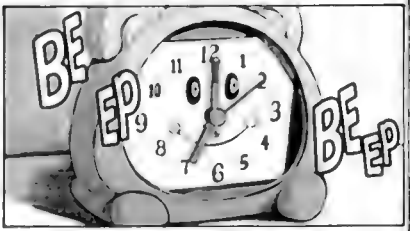
Punpun Pun
Fifth G

My dream is to research outer s
'll study all about outer space an
come a professor. When I beco
ofessor, I think I want to study about
ace migration. In order to do that,
have to study lots and lots and go
lots of universities. The universe
vast. so even if Japan runs out of
space, we don't have to worry.

"I'll study hard, really hard, and become a space expert.

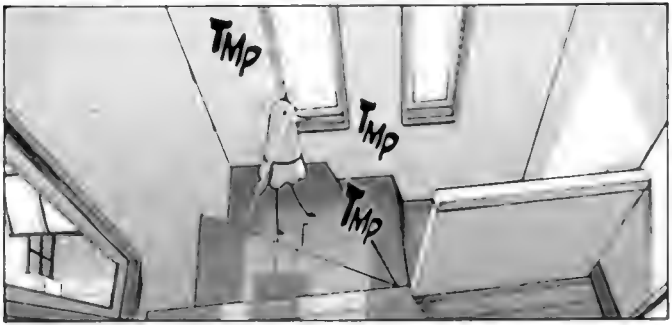
"I'll find a way for mankind to migrate to outer space!

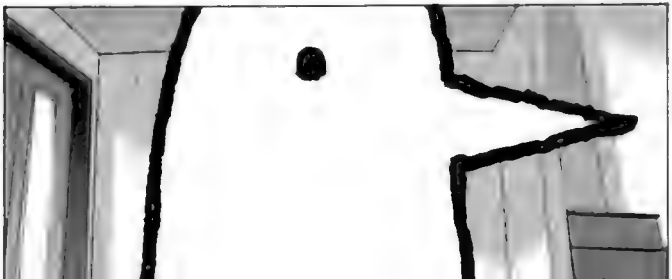
PUNPUN, HAVE YOU DONE YOUR HOMEWORK?
"Then...
SHUK
SHUK
SHUK
"I think that's cool."
"... maybe..."
"...Aiko will like me!"

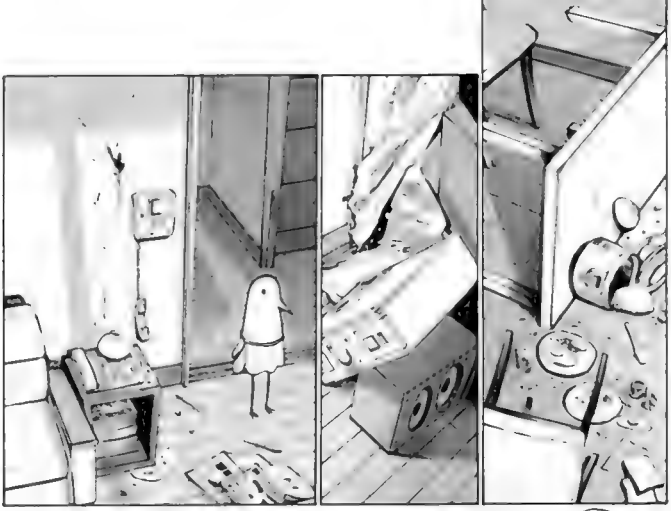

BE
EP
BE
EP

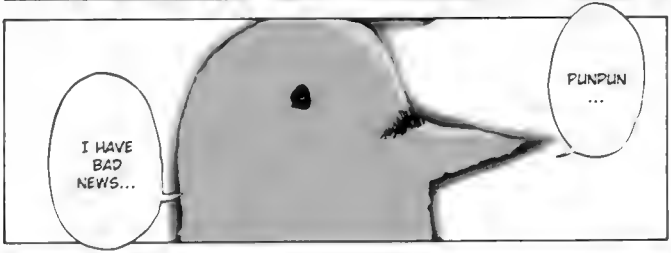
CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP

P
ONK


TMP
TMP
TMP

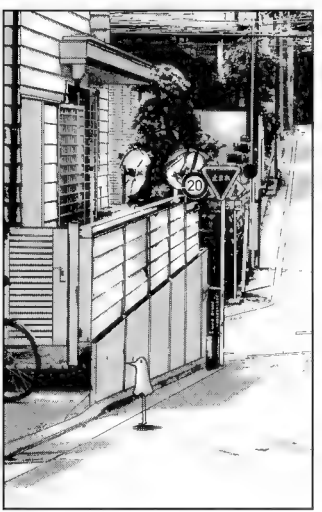





PUNPUN
...
I HAVE
BAD
NEWS...

THERE
WAS A
BURGLAR.

PUNPUN ...
IT'S TRUE.
SOMEONE REALLY BROKE INTO OUR HOUSE.
YOU BELIEVE ME, DON'T YOU, PUNPUN?!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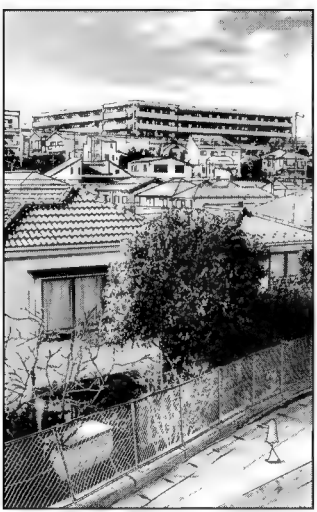
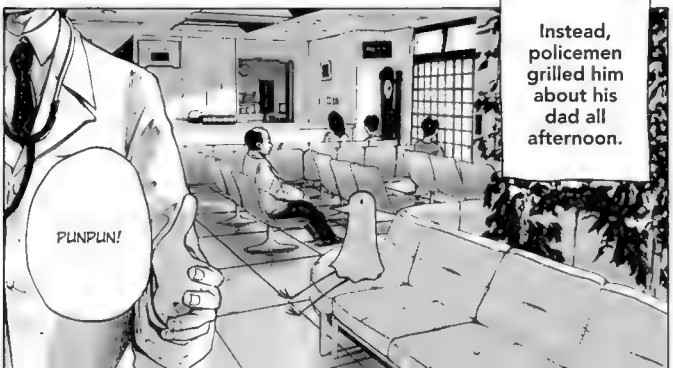


Punpun didn't go to school that day.

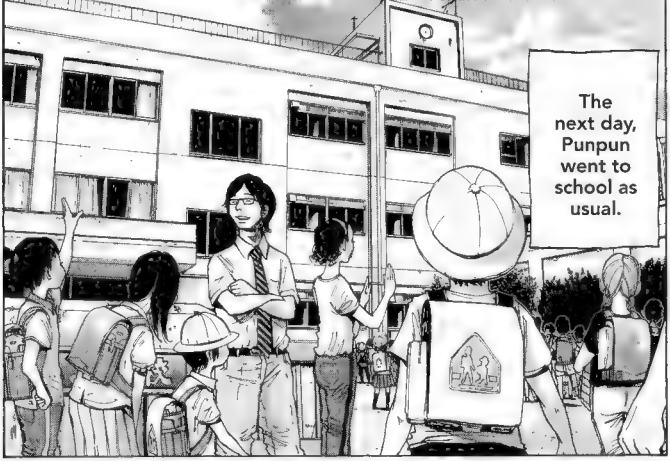


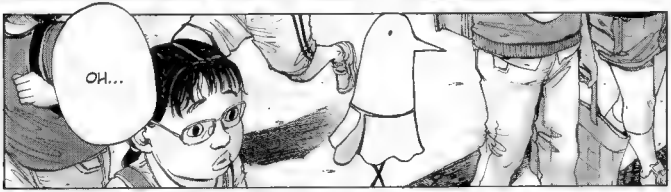
OKAY, LET'S GO HOME.

Uncle Yuichi was his mother's younger brother and lived in Ofuna with Granny.
Uncle Yuichi was there to pick up Punpun.

DON'T WORRY. I'LL STAY WITH YOU AT THE HOUSE!
AT LEAST BEING UNEMPLOYED IS GOOD FOR SOMETHING NOW! HA HA...
NOT THAT IT'S ANYTHING TO LAUGH ABOUT.
YOUR MOM... IT'S NOT LIFE THREATEN-ING...
...BUT SHE NEEDS TO STAY IN THE HOSPITAL FOR A WHILE.

WHOA, HE REALLY DID A NUMBER ON THIS PLACE.
I MEAN, I KNOW HE GOES ALL OUT ON THINGS, BUT, WHOA...
HMM?
LET'S HAVE A LITTLE FUN BEFORE WE CLEAN UP!
GROOZOOM


The next day, Punpun went to school as usual.


OH...

As he expected, Aiko was already popular with the other students.
MORNING ...
H-HI, PUNPUN!

OKAY, GOOD MORNING, EVERYONE!
WE'RE DOING LANGUAGE ARTS FOR THE FIRST HOUR!
BUT BEFORE THAT...!
NYA NYA!
WAH HA HA!
PUNPUN!
DID YOU FINISH THE ESSAY I ASSIGNED TWO DAYS AGO?
Being called on with no warning made Punpun a little nervous.
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
EVERYONE READ THEIR ESSAYS TO THE CLASS YESTERDAY MORNING.
SO NOW LET'S HEAR YOURS.
DON'T TELL ME YOU DIDN'T DO IT?

AHHHH!
RAHHH!
YOU HAVE TO DO YOUR HOME-WORK!
WONK
WONK
AHHH!
YOU HAVE TO DO IT, NO MATTER WHAT!!
WONK
YOU SHOULD KNOOOW THAT!

WE ALL HAVE BURDENS TO SHOULDER.
I KNOW THAT.
BUT IT'S UNFAIR TO MAKE AN EXCEPTION. RIGHT?
WE HAVE TO BE FAIR...
WHAT THE HELL IS FAIR, ANY-WAY?!
GYA AAA AAA AAH!
DON'T GET COCKY JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE KIDS!
NOO OOO OO!
SIR...
I THINK PUNPUN DID HIS HOME-WORK...

PSYCH!

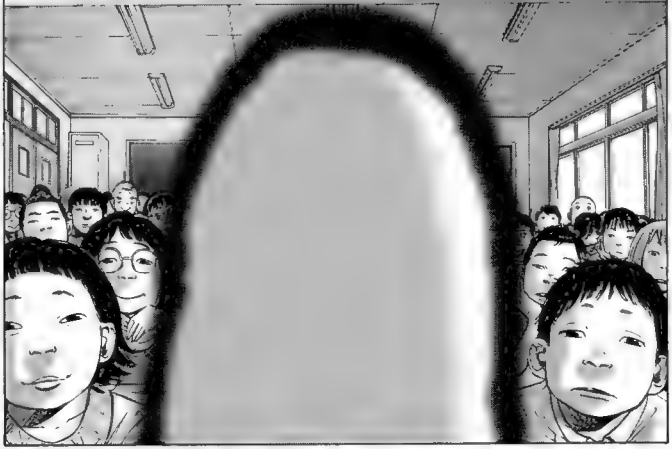
MR. HEAD TEACHER ...
YES, MR. PRINCIPAL?
ARE YOU BORED? WOULD YOU LIKE TO PLAY HIDE-AND-SEEK?

EEEEE!
YES, I WOULD.
OKAY, THEN. ROCK, PAPER...
...SCISSORS.
EEE!

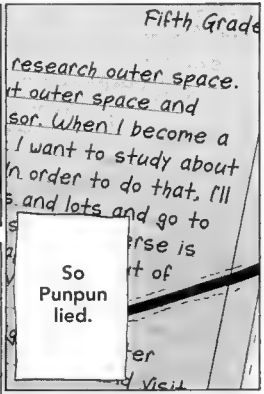
Punpun's dream was to become a space expert and help people emigrate to another planet.

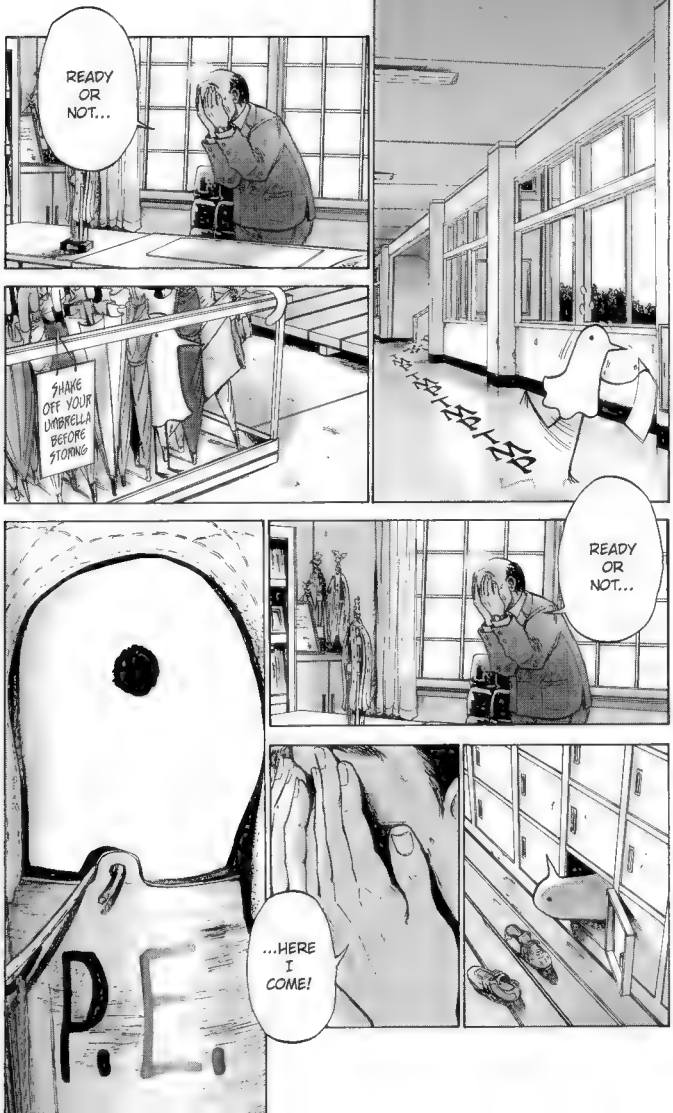
WHAT'S YOUR DREAM, PUNPUN?
OKAY ...
Punpun had every confidence in his plans.
Fifth Grade
s to research outer space.
about outer space and
rofessor. When I become a
I think I want to study abo
gration. In order to do that,
study lots and lots and go
universities. The universe
so even if Japan runs out of
e, we don't have to worry.
But what if...
But...

And...
...someone in class pointed out that it was impossible and made fun of him...?
...Aiko was watching!
That thought ...
...made Punpun so embarrassed, he felt like he was going to die.
CLAP CLAP
OKAY, PUNPUN!
SPEAK UP SO WE CAN ALL HEAR!

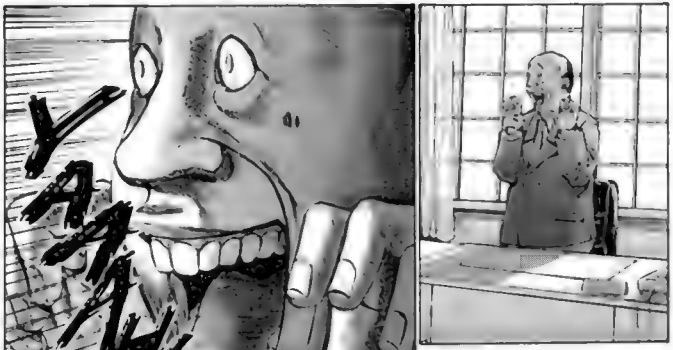


"My dream is to work in an average office and have an average family."



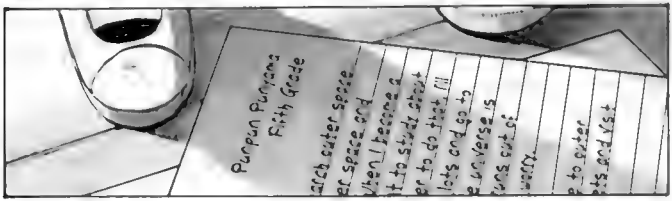

READY OR NOT...
SHAKE OFF YOUR UMBRELLA BEFORE STORING
READY OR NOT...
...HERE I COME!
P.E.

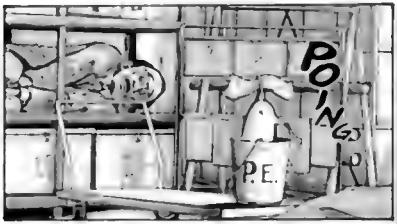
EEE!

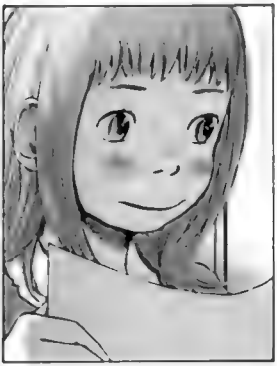

ﾔﾒﾃｰ!

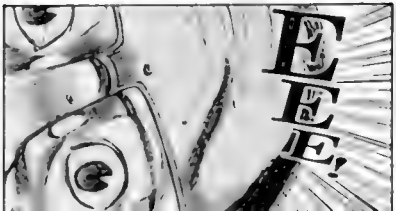
I HEARD MY MOM TALKING ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED WITH HIS DAD. THAT'S PROBABLY WHY.
PUNPUN WAS ACTING WEIRD.
HEY!
IS THERE SOMETHING WE CAN DO TO MAKE HIM FEEL BETTER?
I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY TO PUNPUN THIS MORNING.
ME NEITHER.
THE POLICE ARE HOLDING PUNPUN'S DAD, RIGHT?
BECAUSE THEY THINK *HE* CAUSED ALL THAT DAMAGE?
WHY NOT TREAT HIM NORMALLY?
WHAT'S "NORMAL" ANYWAY?

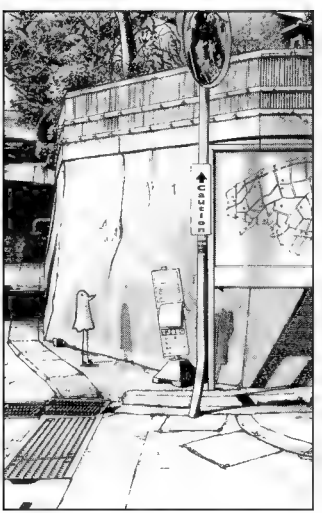
"NORMAL" IS PRETTY HARD...

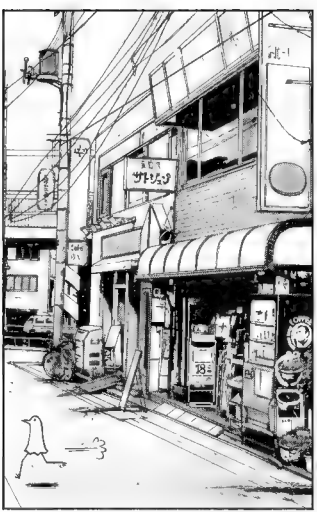

Pompon Purgens
Fifth Grade


BOING
P.E.

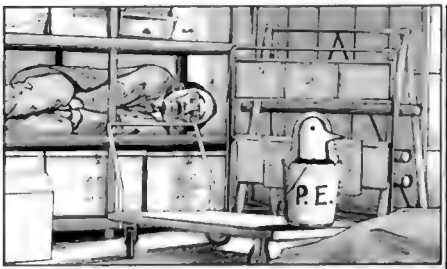



EEE!


CENTRO



Chapter 3

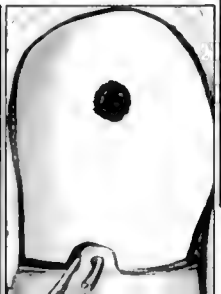


Punpun was deep in thought.

He wondered if helping mankind emigrate to another planet was an impossible dream for him.

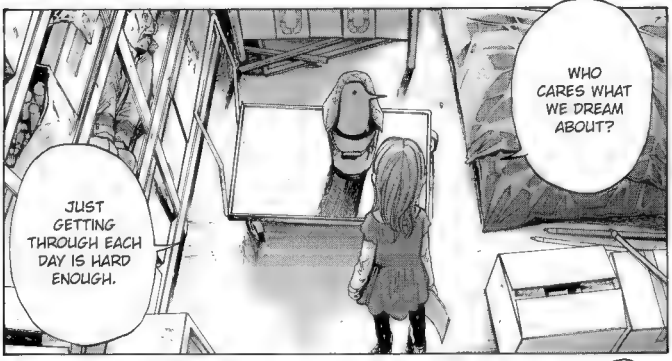
He was so confused...

...he wasn't even sure if he wanted to become a space expert anymore.

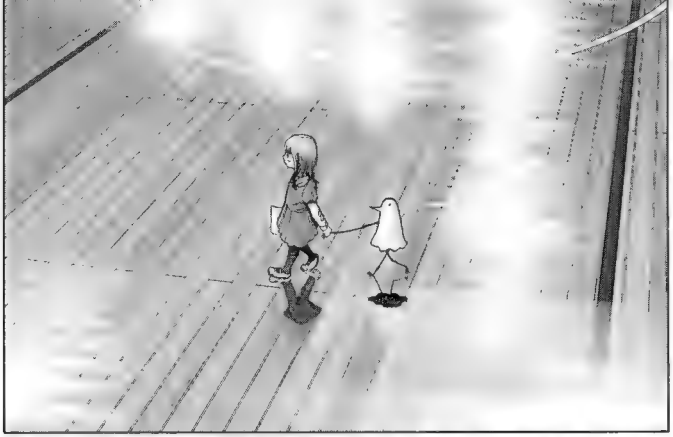


PUNPUN!
WHY DID YOU LIE?
BEING A PROFESSOR IS COOL.
YOU SHOULD SPEAK UP AND TELL EVERYONE...
...THAT YOU'RE GOING TO SAVE THEM FROM EXTINCTION.
YOU'RE A COWARD.

YOU WERE SCARED THEY WERE GOING TO LAUGH AT YOU, RIGHT?
SO LET THEM!
PEOPLE WHO DISCOURAGE OTHERS WILL NEVER FIND THEIR OWN HAPPINESS!


WHO CARES WHAT WE DREAM ABOUT?
JUST GETTING THROUGH EACH DAY IS HARD ENOUGH.

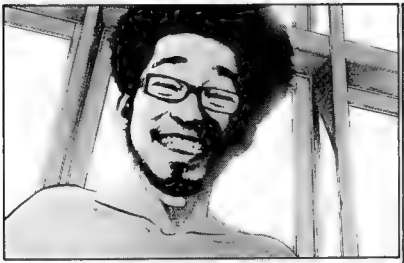
COME ON...
...LET'S GO.

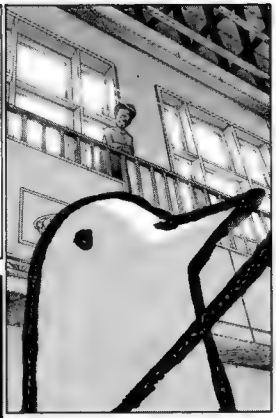


These were the thoughts that crossed Punpun's mind.

...and so small.

Aiko's hand felt soft and warm...

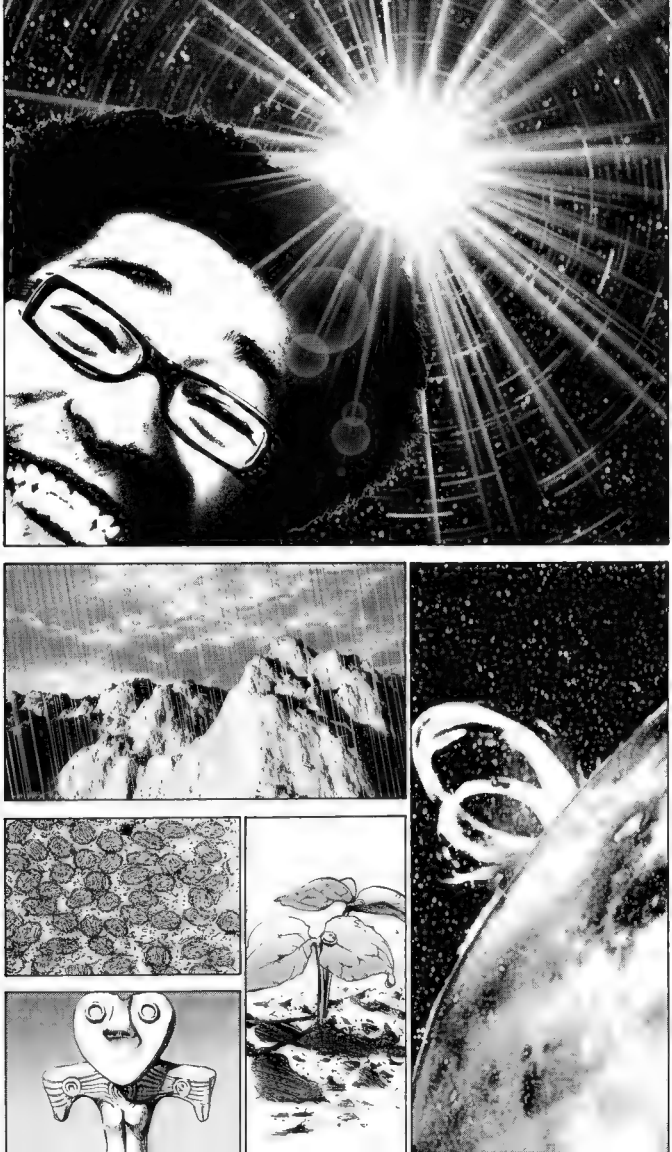


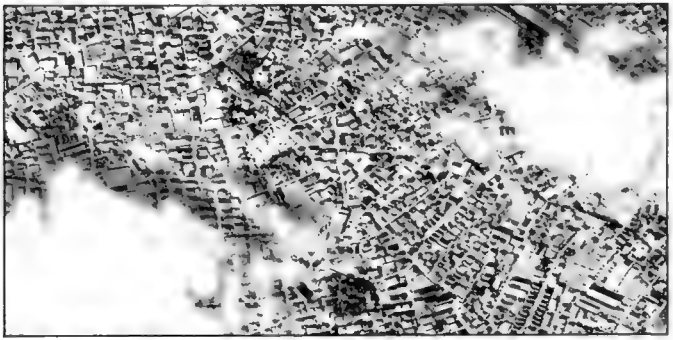


...to let go of her hand.

...that he didn't want...

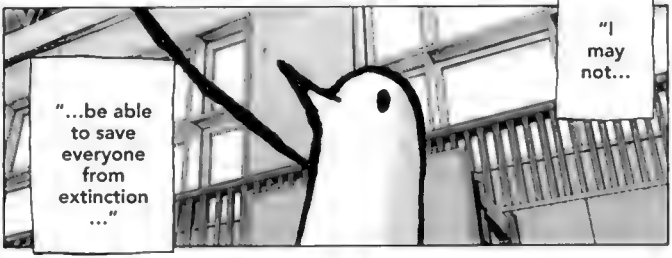
And he also thought...

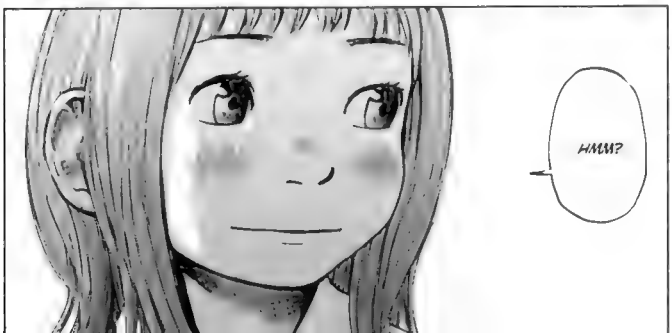




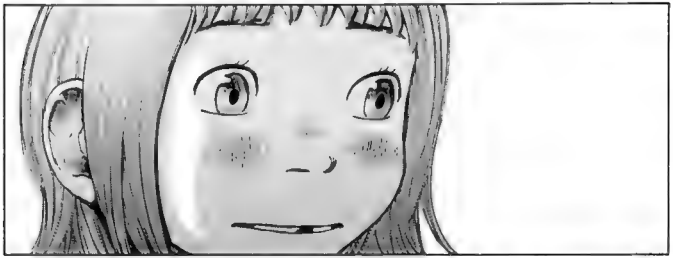
...over and over again.

One thing ran through Punpun's head...


"I may not...
"...be able to save everyone from extinction..."

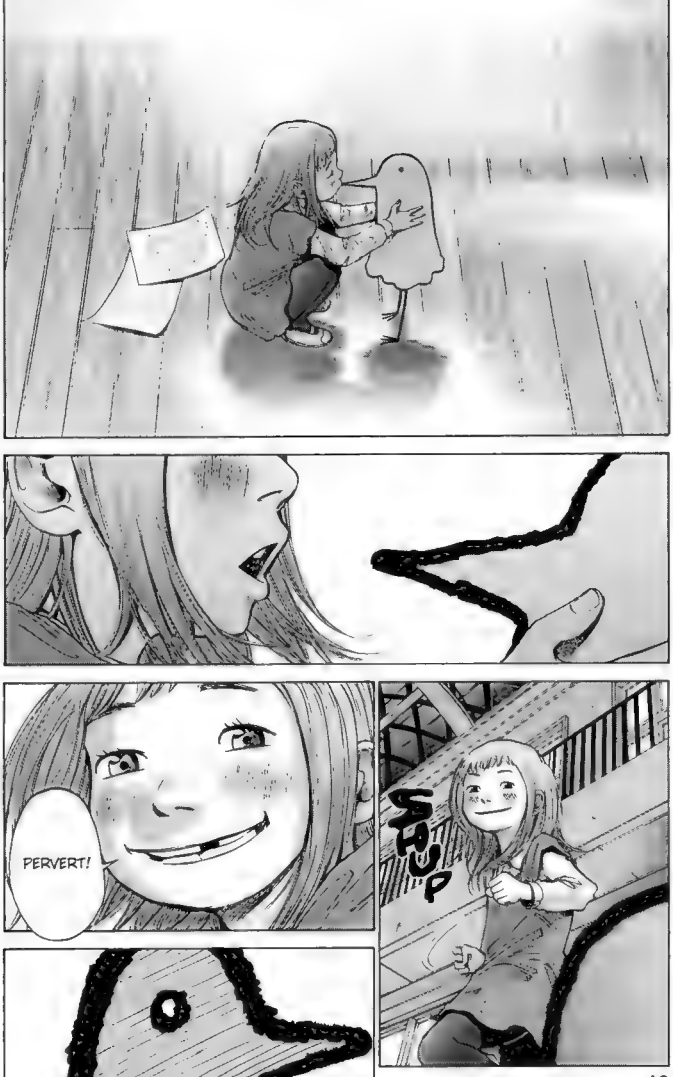

HMM?

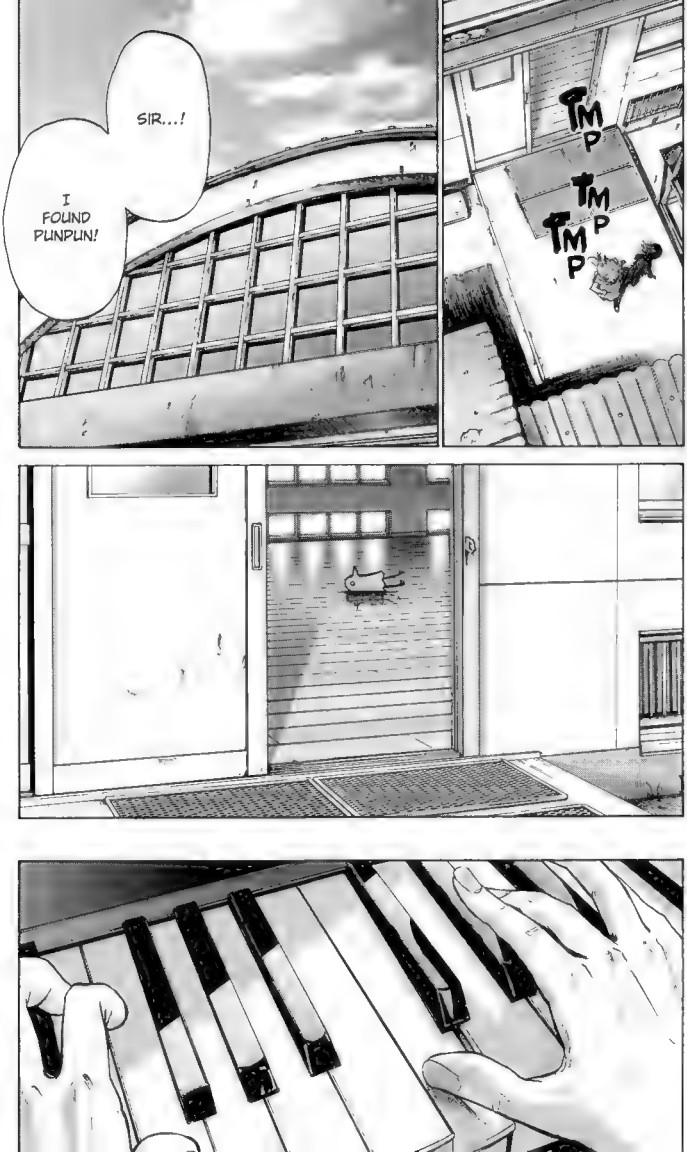
"But no matter what happens...
"...I want to protect you, Aiko."



WHY?

"Because I love you."


PERVERT!
SKIP

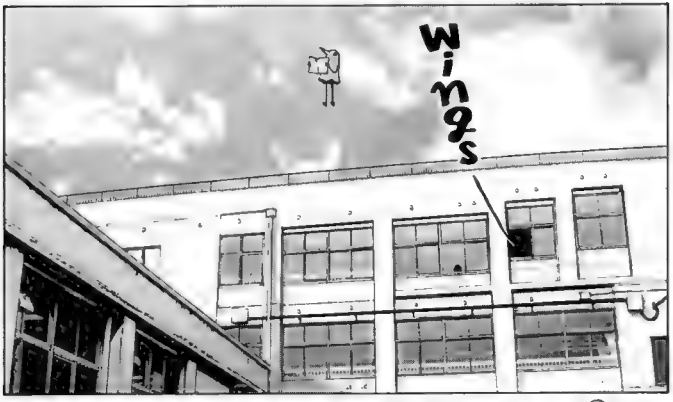

SIR...!
I FOUND PUNPUN!
TMP
TMP
TMP

If I had one wish right now

to come true

Punpun couldn't bring himself to look at Aiko.
PUNPUN!
IF YOU DON'T PAY ATTENTION, I'LL PUT YOU IN A HEADLOCK!
AHAHAA

His heart was beating so fast...
I'd wish for
you to
give me
...he felt like he was going to fly away.


Wings

...
PUN.
PUNPUN!

*PWC=Porn Watchers' Club

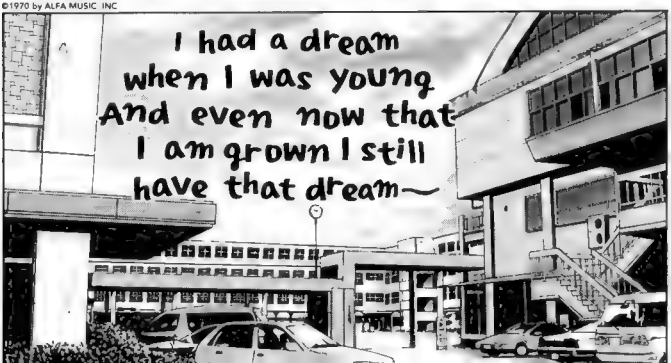
THANK YOU FOR STOPPING BY.
OH NO, THANK YOU.
WE ALL GO THROUGH HARDSHIPS.
IT'S THE ONE THING NO ONE CAN RUN AWAY FROM.

I want to

Spread my wings and fly far far away

Across the sky where no sadness dwells

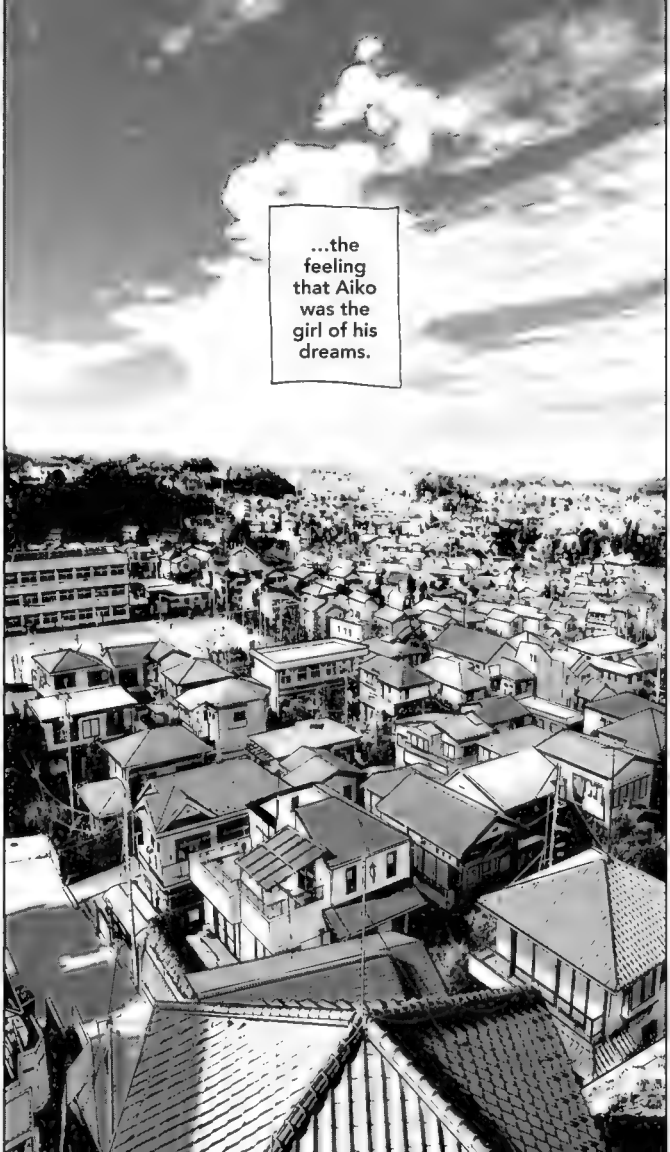
©1970 by ALFA MUSIC INC



At that moment, Punpun was having a feeling he didn't quite understand.

He was still young, so this was the first time Punpun had ever experienced this particular feeling.

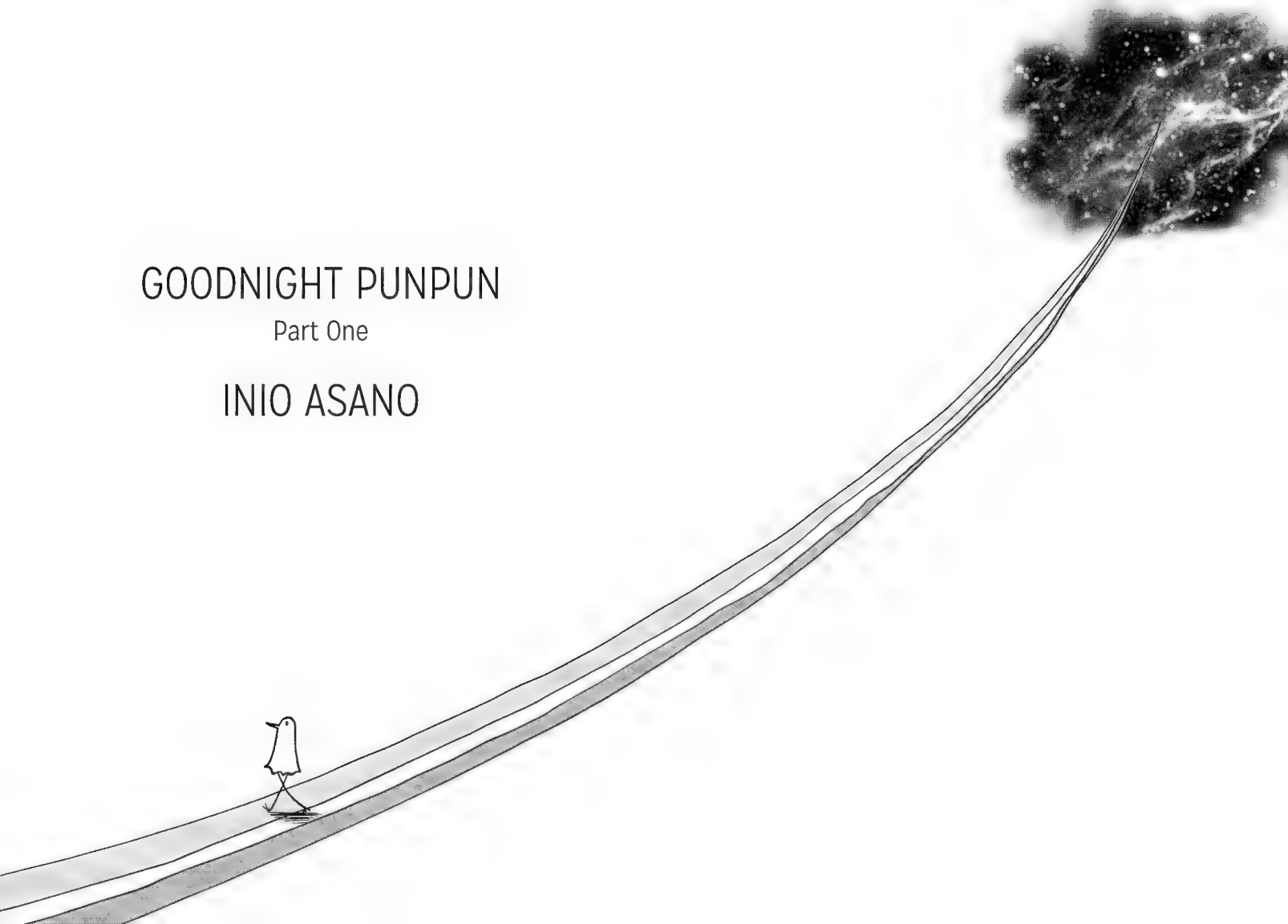
It was...


...the feeling that Aiko was the girl of his dreams.

GOODNIGHT PUNPUN

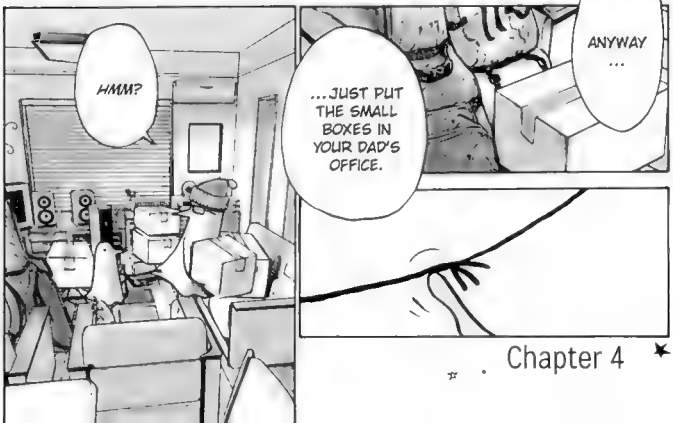
Part One

INIO ASANO



Today was a happy day, a day to celebrate.
GOOD MORNING, PUNPUN.

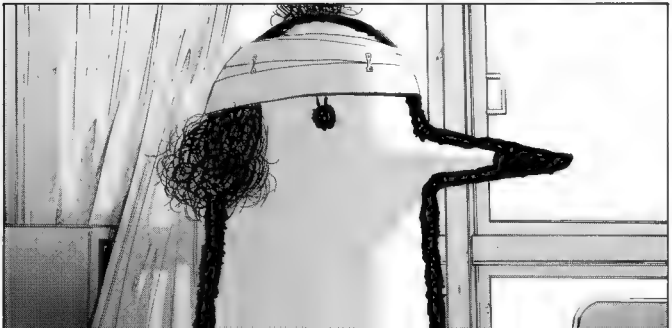
CAN YOU HELP ME UNPACK?
YOUR MOM AND I TALKED IT OVER, AND I'LL BE LIVING HERE FOR A WHILE.
PARTLY BECAUSE MY PARENTS ARE GETTING TIRED OF THEIR UNEMPLOYED SON LIVING AT HOME, BUT—

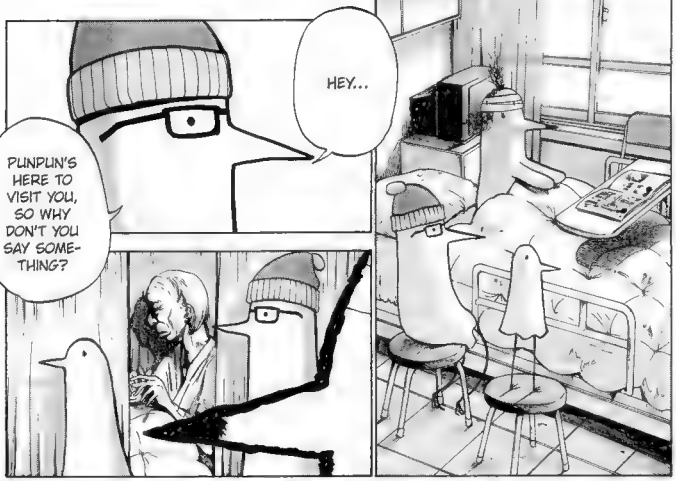

ANYWAY ...
...JUST PUT THE SMALL BOXES IN YOUR DAD'S OFFICE.
HMM?

Chapter 4

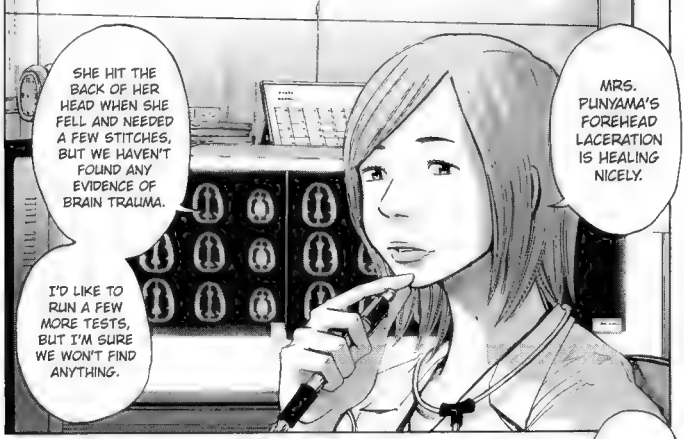
VROOOM
THAT'D BE A PROBLEM WHEN YOUR DAD COMES HOME.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
OH... YEAH.

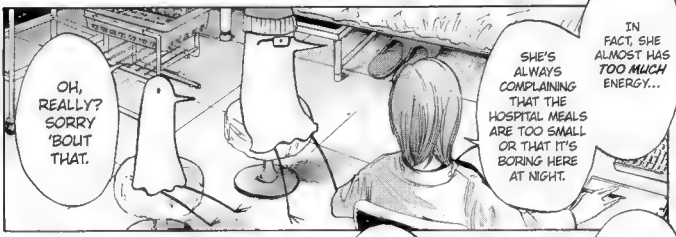
HOSPITAL



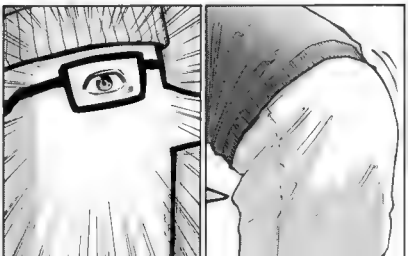

HEY...
PUNPUN'S HERE TO VISIT YOU, SO WHY DON'T YOU SAY SOMETHING?

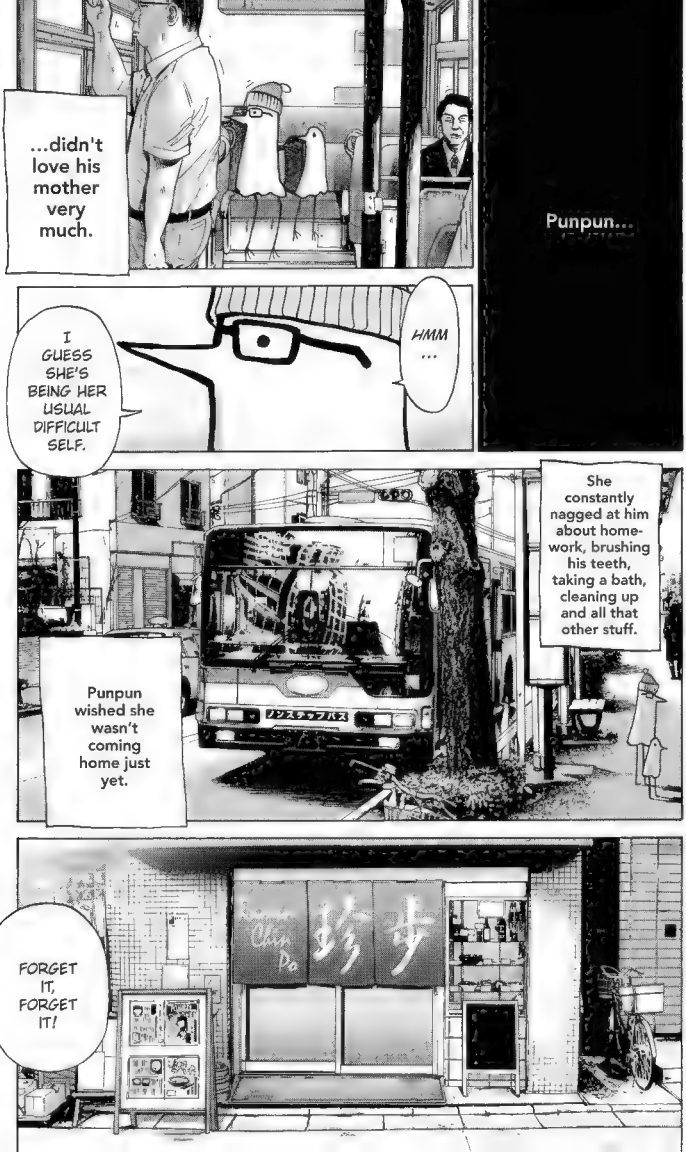
VROOOOM


MRS. PUNYAMA'S FOREHEAD LACERATION IS HEALING NICELY.
SHE HIT THE BACK OF HER HEAD WHEN SHE FELL AND NEEDED A FEW STITCHES, BUT WE HAVEN'T FOUND ANY EVIDENCE OF BRAIN TRAUMA.
I'D LIKE TO RUN A FEW MORE TESTS, BUT I'M SURE WE WON'T FIND ANYTHING.


IN FACT, SHE ALMOST HAS *TOO MUCH* ENERGY...
SHE'S ALWAYS COMPLAINING THAT THE HOSPITAL MEALS ARE TOO SMALL OR THAT IT'S BORING HERE AT NIGHT.
OH, REALLY? SORRY 'BOUT THAT.

YOU MUST BE MRS. PUN-YAMA'S SON!
YOUR MOM WILL BE ABLE TO GO HOME SOON!




...didn't love his mother very much.
Punpun...
I GUESS SHE'S BEING HER USUAL DIFFICULT SELF.
HMM ...
She constantly nagged at him about homework, brushing his teeth, taking a bath, cleaning up and all that other stuff.
Punpun wished she wasn't coming home just yet.
FORGET IT, FORGET IT!

NO, NO...
DAD, PLEASE LET US PAY.
PUT THAT AWAY.
NO, NO. DON'T WORRY ABOUT.
HOW CAN I TAKE MONEY FROM MY DAUGHTER AND SON-IN-LAW!
USE THAT MONEY FOR THE BABY ON THE WAY.
OH YEAH, I HAVE SOME-THING FOR YOU.
DON'T LEAVE YET!
MUMBLE MUMBLE

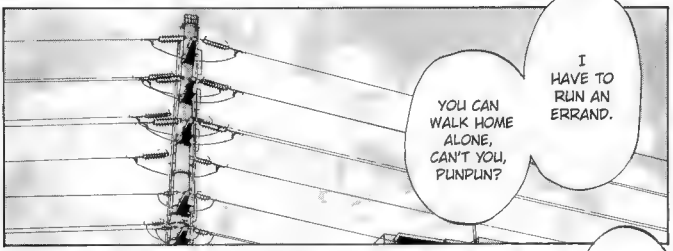
DAD'S CHANGED A LOT.
HE'S BECOME NICE IN HIS OLD AGE.
I GUESS HE'S BEEN LONELY SINCE MOM DIED.
HE USED TO BE SO HARDHEADED. I WAS AFRAID OF HIM.
I FOUND IT!
I WENT AROUND TO ALL THE SHRINES TO COLLECT GOOD-LUCK CHARMS!
HERE, TAKE THEM!
SERI-OUSLY ...
WHAT MUST THE GODS BE THINKING?
THANK YOU!

YOU'RE ALONE NOW, DAD, SO TAKE IT EASY.
YOU'RE WELCOME TO MOVE IN WITH US ANYTIME.
DON'T BE SILLY!
I'M STILL IN MY PRIME!
RATTLE
SHK
SHK
GA
BWA!
SHAK SHAK
BU...
OHH HHH!

WOOH
HIC!
BUH ...
BUOH!
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

GSJD
GSJD
GSJD
GSJD
GSJD

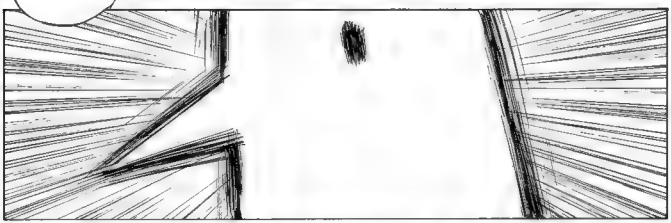
LADIES!
THE FOOD WE'RE FEATURING ON TODAY'S SHOW WILL PREVENT ANY ILLNESS!
IF YOU REMEMBER THIS ONE FOOD, YOU'LL HAVE A LONG AND HEALTHY LIFE!

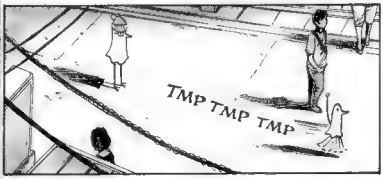


"Do you know when Dad is coming home?" Punpun asked his uncle.

HMM...
WELL... SEE...
THE THING IS... I DON'T KNOW.
"Will he come home sooner if I pray?
"Like... 'Dear God, dear God, tinkle hoy.'"
TINKLE...
...HOY?
EASTSIDE MALL
東口商店街
EASTSIDE MALL

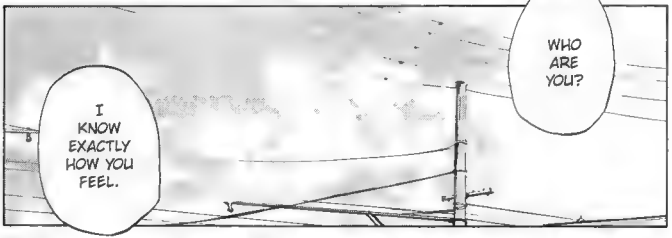
"Dear God, dear God, tinkle hoy" was a chant Uncle Yuichi had taught Punpun three years ago.
OH... TINKLE HOY...
Y-YES, YES.
TINKLE... TINKLE... UH-HUH.
BOMP
HERE...
GET SOME ICE CREAM ON YOUR WAY HOME.

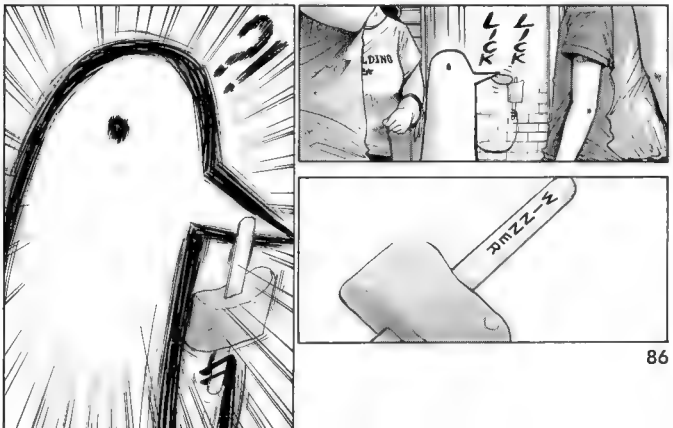


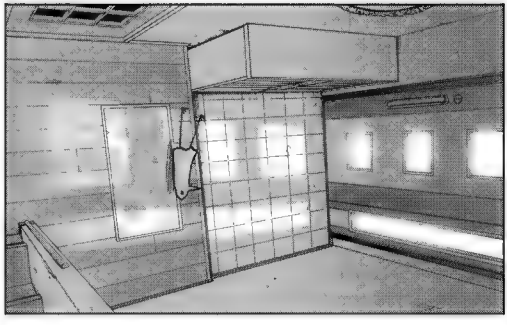

TMP TMP TMP

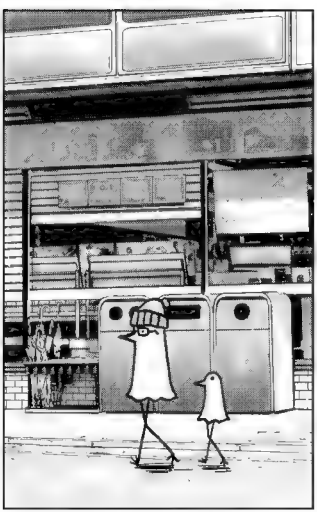
GOD, HUH...
DID GOD CREATE MAN? OR DID MAN CREATE GOD?
IT REALLY DOESN'T MATTER TO ME, BUT...
...I GUESS MAN IS...
FWOOO
HUMANS ARE...
NAH...
I WON'T SAY ANY MORE.
YUP, YUP.

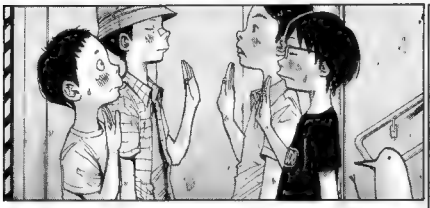
I KNOW JUST WHAT YOU MEAN.
I COULDN'T AGREE MORE.


WHO ARE YOU?
I KNOW EXACTLY HOW YOU FEEL.


?!
LICK
LICK
Z-ZZUK



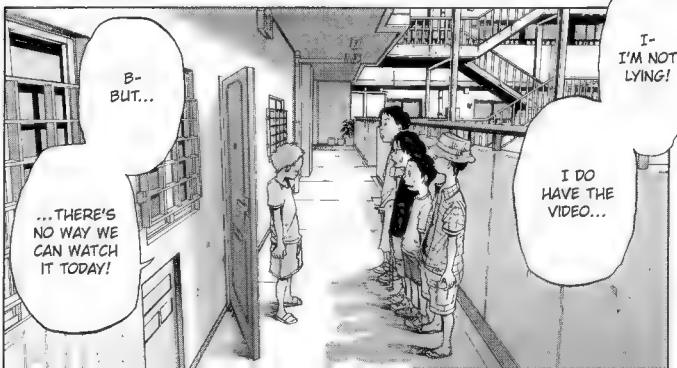




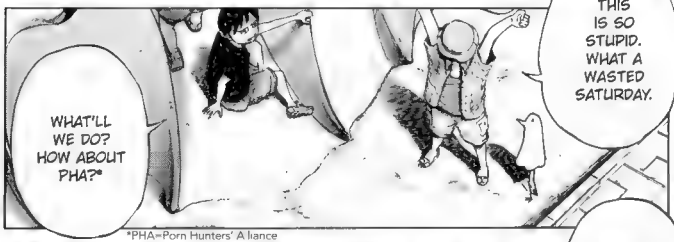
Chapter 5 ☆

A-AND MY MOM'S GONNA COME HOME SOON...
A-AND ACTUALLY ...
...I HAVE AN UPSET STOMACH AND...
...
PWC IS CANCELED.
THE VCR BROKE...

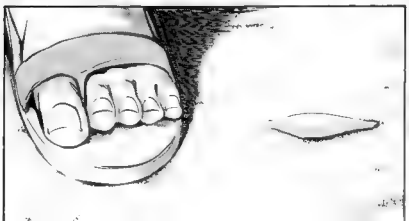
Awww www.
MENUDO


B-BUT...
...THERE'S NO WAY WE CAN WATCH IT TODAY!
I-I'M NOT LYING!
I DO HAVE THE VIDEO...

SHIMIZU LIED TO US AGAIN.
UGH ...
HE NEVER HAD A VIDEO.
NAH... WE SHOULDN'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS.
THE OTHER DAY...
...HE SAID, "I CAN DO A KAMEHAMEHA ATTACK."
LIKE FROM DRAGON BALL. I THOUGHT HE WAS CRAZY, BUT HE INSISTED HE COULD.
SO I MADE HIM SHOW ME AT PANDA PARK.



*PHA=Porn Hunters' Alliance



C'MON, PUNPUN.
YOU TOO!
GUSHE GUSHE
DANCE DANCE
HORK
公園はきれい
KEEP OUR PARKS CLEAN
VROOOOM

ARE YOU SERIOUS?!
FOUND ONE!

BUT IT'S BETTER THAN NOTHING!
U-UGH...
LOOKS PRETTY... USED.
CLUB PAO
690円
SOKO TOSHIDA
吉田あそ子
THE SWEET SUCKER'S WE FOUND IN SHIBUYA... 10 IN A ROW!
HARUMIN, DON'T YOU WANNA SEE THE SEXY PHOTOS?

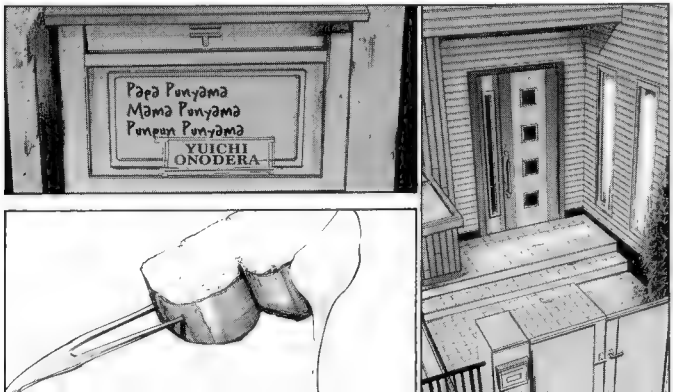
AHH!!
SHUP
SHUP
WHAT'S "CLIMAX"?
DON'T YOU THINK COWPER'S SECRETIONS LOOK LIKE ULTRAMAN'S SPECIUM RAY?
WHAT'S THAT WHITE STUFF ON HER FACE?
HEY, BOYS!
WHAT'RE YOU UP TO?

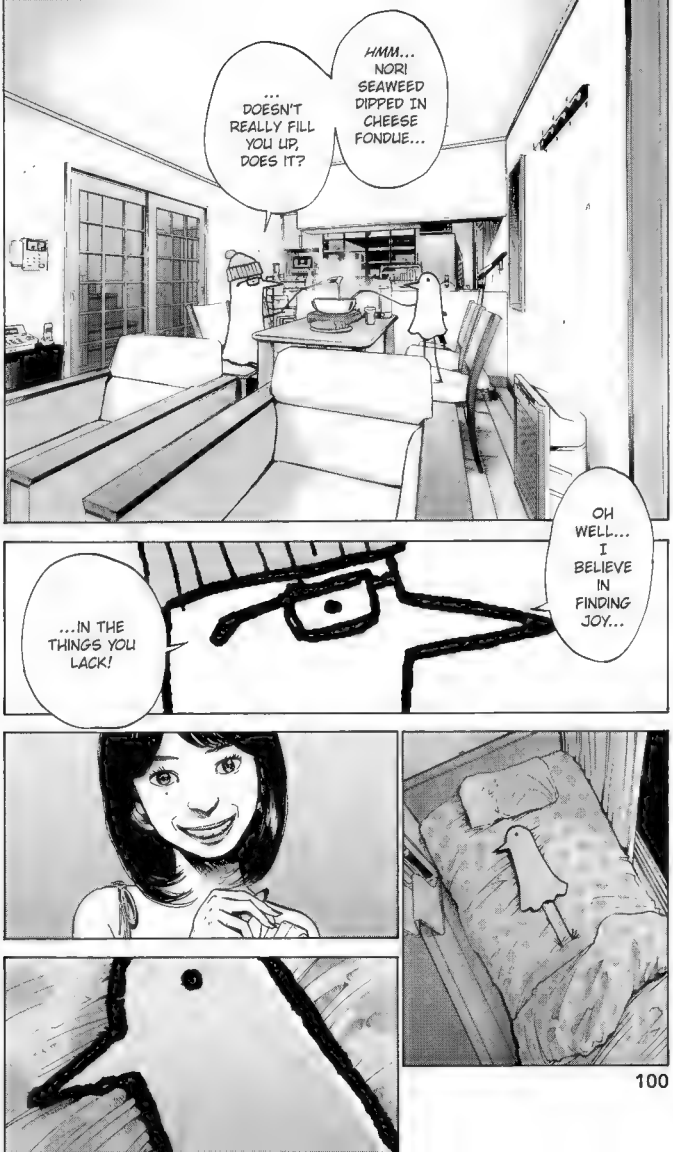
YOU'D BETTER NOT BE DOING SOMETHING BAD!
"It's Aiko!"
J-JUST SHUT UP!
AND GET LOST!
W-WELL, WE'RE PLANNING A TRIP FOR SUMMER VACATION ...
AND...YOU KNOW HOW KIDS CAN'T TRAVEL ALONE?
MENUDO
WHY'RE YOU SNEAKING AROUND?
SO ANYWAY... RIGHT, PUNPUN?
NOD
NOD

A TRIP... THAT SOUNDS GREAT.
AIKO!
DON'T BELIEVE THESE BOYS!
I WISH I COULD GO SOMEWHERE TOO.
I HATE BOYS.
LET'S JUST LEAVE THEM ALONE.
THAT RERUN OF THE SHOW WITH SHIMUTAKU'S GONNA START SOON.
IF YOU LIED TO US, YOU'RE GONNA GET IT LATER!
JUDO

YOU DON'T LIE, RIGHT, PUNPUN?

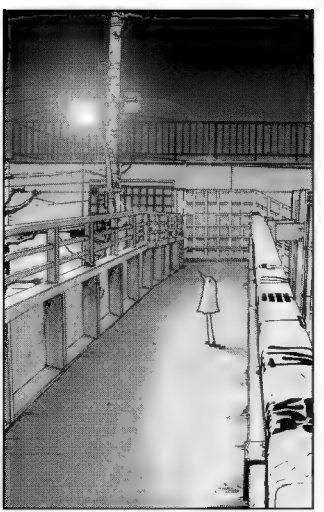
COWPER'S SECRETIONS!
CLIMAX RAYS!
MENUDO
TMP
TMP
TMP

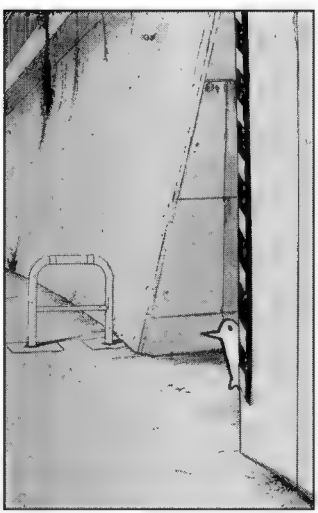

Papa Punyama
Mama Punyama
Pumpun Punyama
YUICHI ONODERA

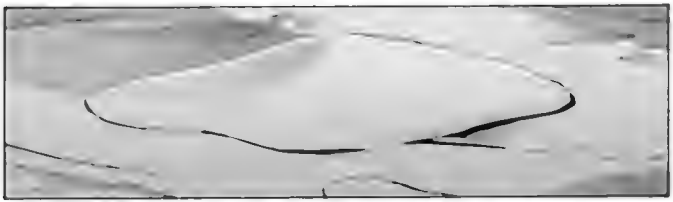

HMM... NORI SEAWEED DIPPED IN CHEESE FONDUE...
... DOESN'T REALLY FILL YOU UP, DOES IT?
OH WELL... I BELIEVE IN FINDING JOY...
...IN THE THINGS YOU LACK!

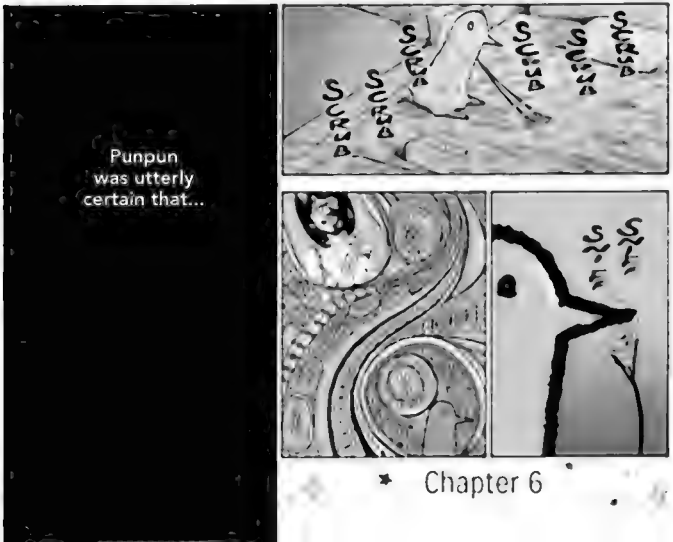
TOSS
TURN

THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP



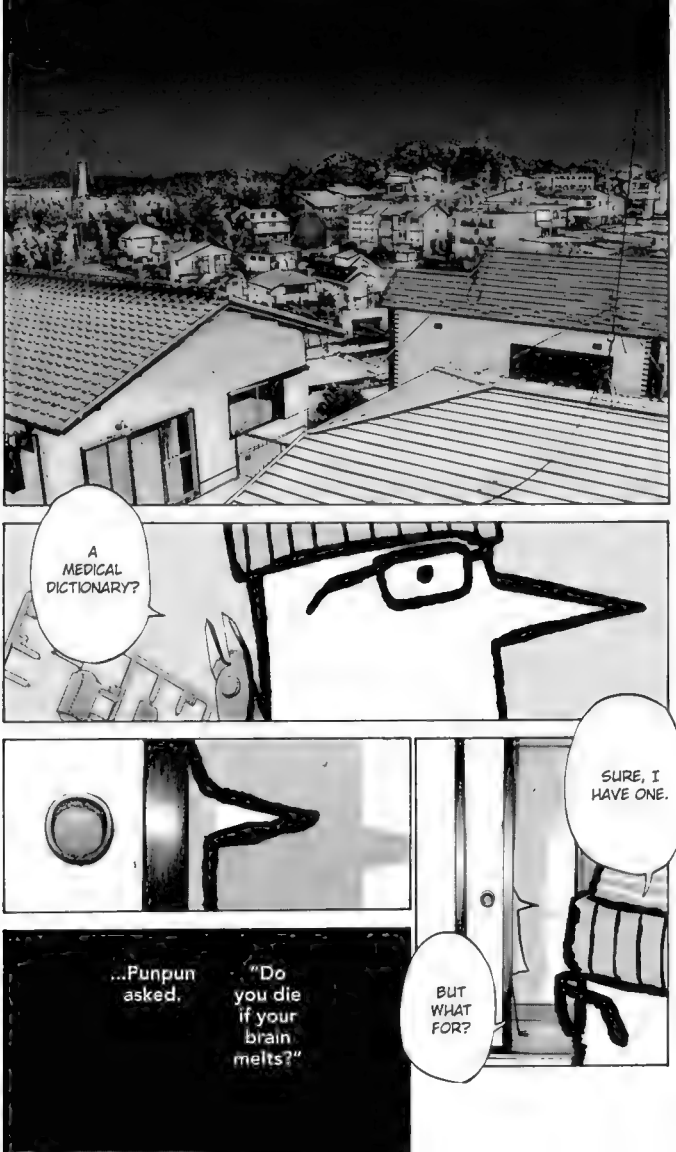





Punpun was utterly certain that...
SUSSA
SUSSA
SUSSA
SUSSA
SUSSA
SUSSA
SUSSA
SUSSA

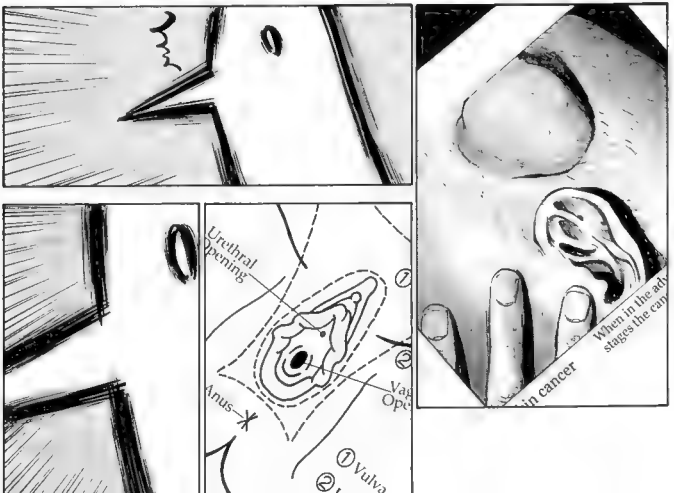
My brain!

My brain squirted out of my weiner!!

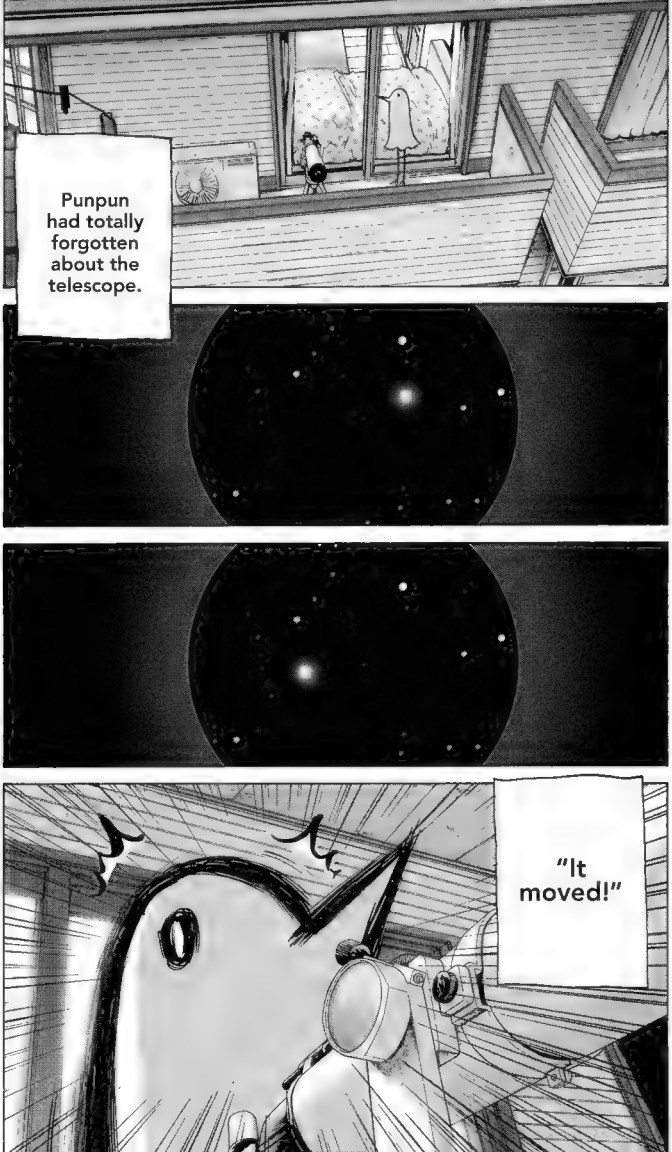

A MEDICAL DICTIONARY?
SURE, I HAVE ONE.
BUT WHAT FOR?
...Punpun asked, "Do you die if your brain melts?"

"Is it possible for your brain to melt and squirt out of a weird place?"
Punpun mustered up all his courage and asked...
YOUR BRAIN?
I'VE NEVER HEARD OF THAT HAPPENING, BUT I ASSUME SO.
...AH-HA.
I SEE... SO THAT'S WHAT'S GOING ON. HMM...
DON'T WORRY, PUNPUN, YOU WON'T DIE.
AND, PUN-PUN...
THERE ARE THINGS IN THE WORLD YOU KNOW NOTHING ABOUT.
I'VE GOT SOME BOOKS YOU CAN BORROW SO YOU CAN READ UP ON THEM.

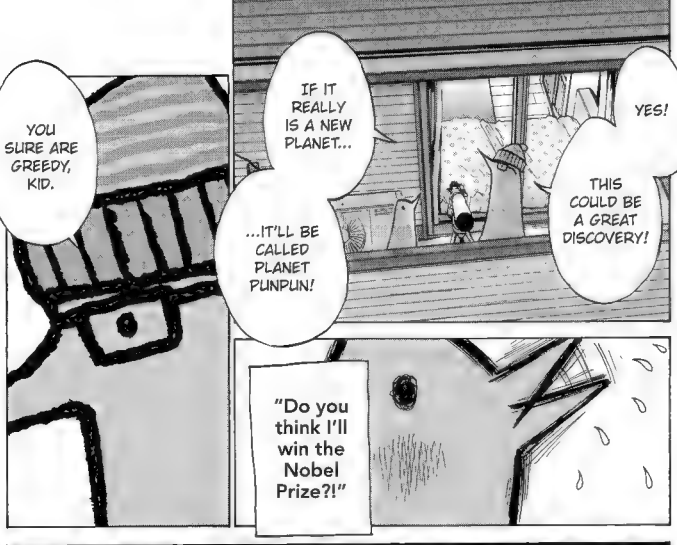
Punpun had a hard time with some of the bigger words, so he pored over the illustrations instead.



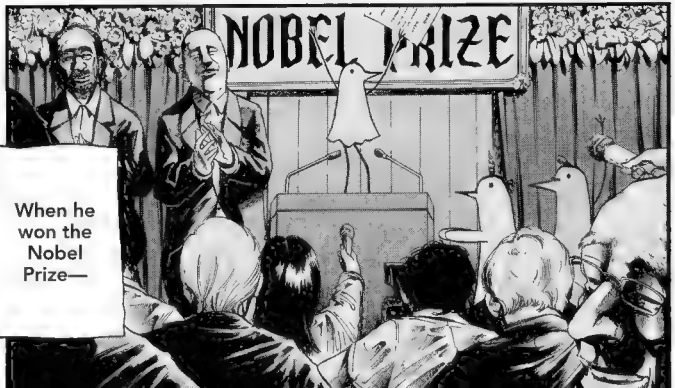
Punpun was suddenly very anxious.

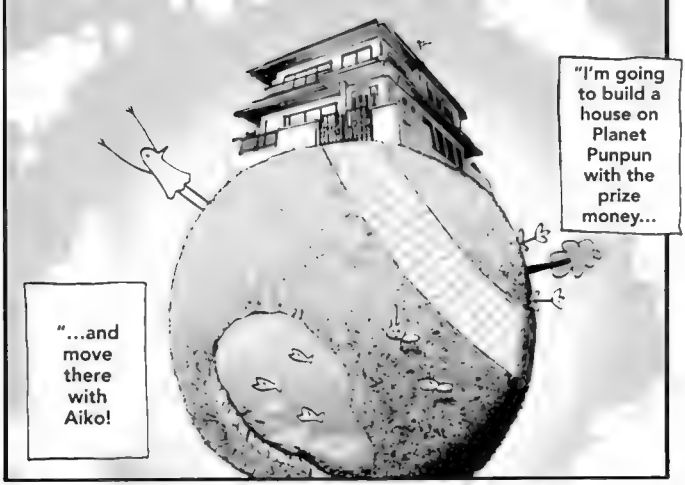

Punpun had totally forgotten about the telescope.
"It moved!"

WHAT'S GOT YOU EXCITED ENOUGH TO DROOL, PUNPUN?
SOME-THING'S MOVING UP THERE?
HMM... I DON'T SEE ANYTHING.
GRANTED, YOU'RE STILL A CHILD. BUT IT'S REALLY IRRITATING!
IT WAS PROBABLY A SATELLITE.
"Could I have discovered a new planet?!"


YOU SURE ARE GREEDY, KID.
IF IT REALLY IS A NEW PLANET...
...IT'LL BE CALLED PLANET PUNPUN!
YES!
THIS COULD BE A GREAT DISCOVERY!
"Do you think I'll win the Nobel Prize?!"

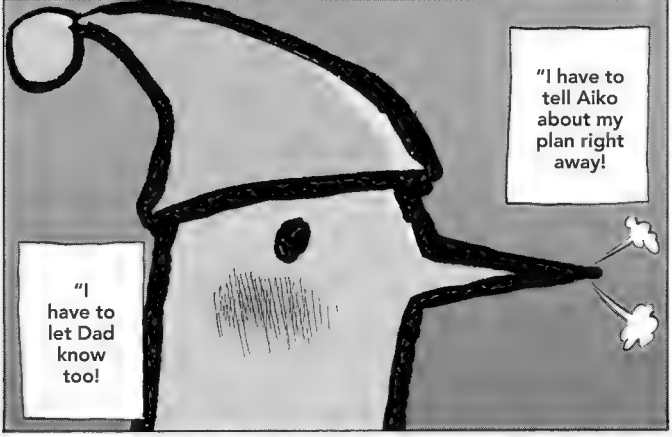
Punpun was completely beside himself.



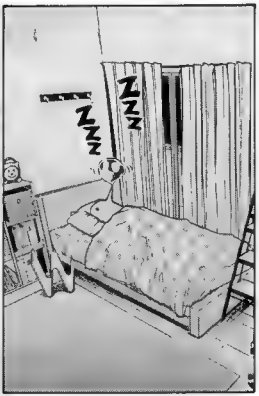

"I'm going to build a house on Planet Punpun with the prize money...
"...and move there with Aiko!

"And I'll get a dog, even if Mom says no!
"It'll have all the video games ever!

Punpun was so excited he couldn't sleep.
"If there's money left over, I'll buy a house for Dad and Mom too."

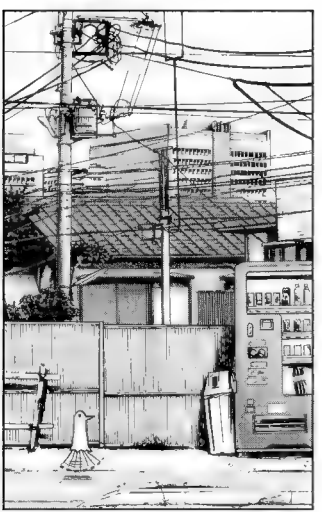


"I just know they're going to be impressed..."



"TAKUMI" "SHIMUTAKA" WITH
AN INTERVIEW
THE GENERATIONAL STAR TALKS ABOUT HIS
SHIMURA
STY

EEE!
But Punpun had a hard time finding a chance to speak to Aiko.
H-HEY...!
BIG NEWS!
HARUMIN AND...!

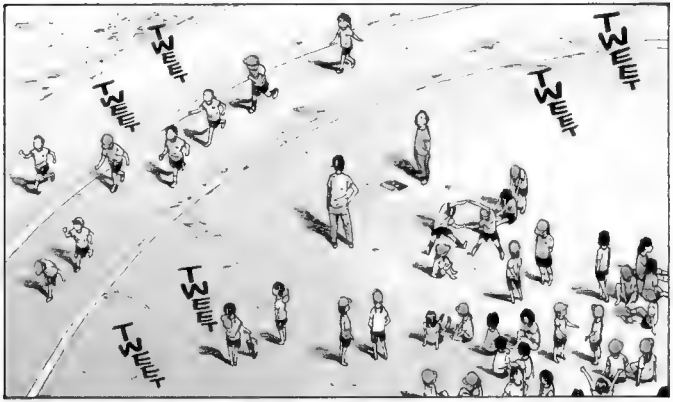


TWEET
HEY, HARUMI!
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
PUT SOME EFFORT INTO IT!
HEY ...
WAS SONODA TELLING HARUMI THAT SHE LIKES HIM?
PROBABLY.
DOES THAT MEAN THEY'LL START HANGING OUT TOGETHER NOW?
ISN'T THAT OBVIOUS? THEY'VE LIKED EACH OTHER FOREVER.
IF YOU MAKE ME MAD, I'LL BREAK YOUR NECK!
SEKI

Chapter 7 ☆

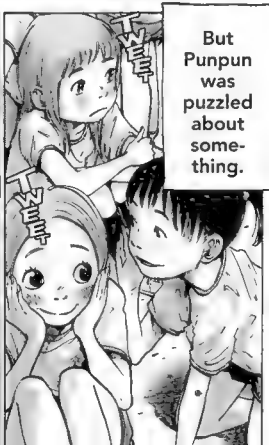
This was a terribly new and modern concept for Punpun.

"When two people like each other, they hang out together."

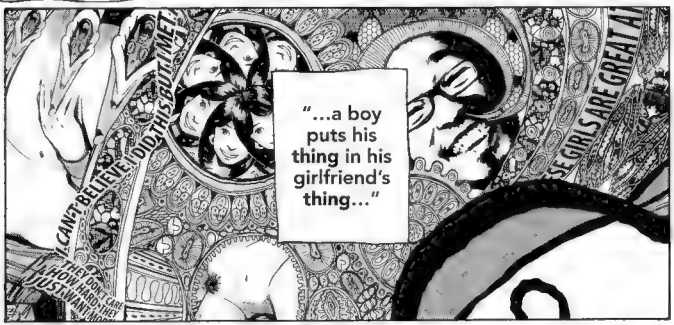


What did "hang out" mean, exactly?

But Punpun was puzzled about something.



TWEET
Images of what Harumin had said the other day raced through Punpun's mind.


"...a boy puts his thing in his girlfriend's thing..."
I CAN'T BELIEVE I DID THIS BUKKAKE!
THEY DON'T CARE HOW HARD THEY LUST AND HANDJOB

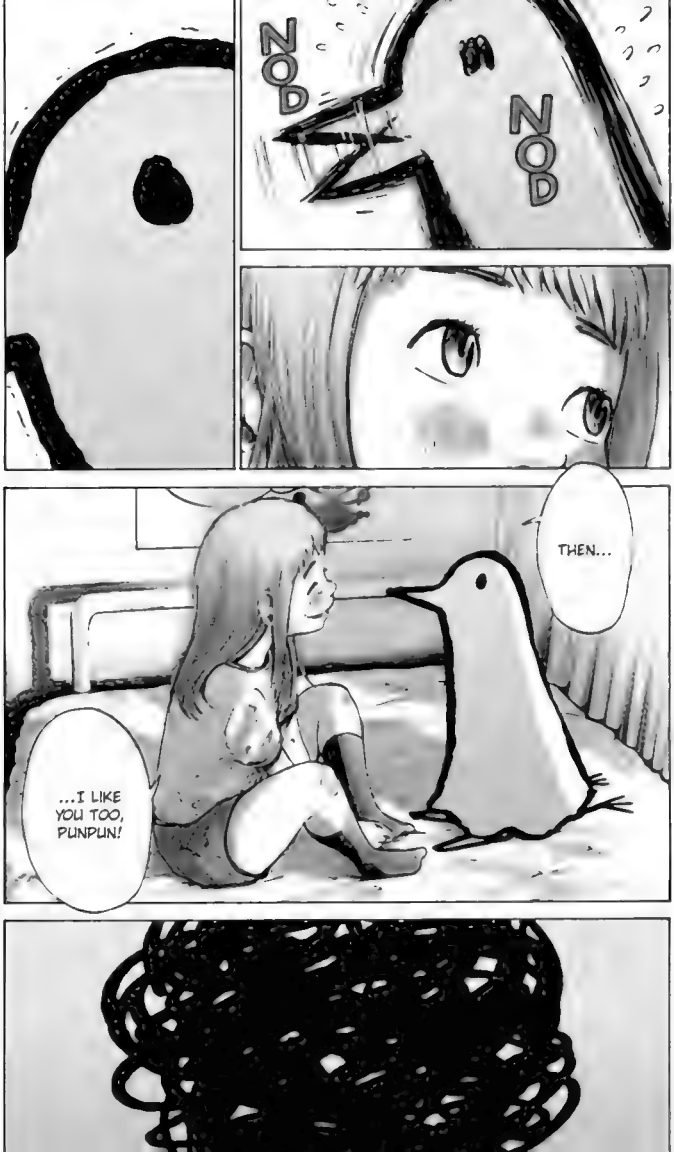
SIR!

YOU HAVE A STICK, AND YOU HAVE TO GET A WOBBLY BALL INTO A HOLE. USING YOUR HIPS IS CRUCIAL.
WHAT AM I TALKING ABOUT?
THE ANSWER IS "CUP-AND-BALL GAME."
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?
When a boy and girl like each other and hang out, they have sex.
TWEET
TWEET
TWEET
TWEET
SUCH A NASTY MIND.

SHKKA
That question consumed Punpun.
If that was the case, how did Aiko feel about him?
TWEET
TWEET
TWEET
TWEET
WHAT? YOU FELL?
THAT'S JUST A SCRAPE.
REALLY, KIDS THESE DAYS ARE SUCH WHINERS.
OKAY ...
I'VE DIS-INFECTED THE AREA.
I'M GOING OUT TO TAKE CARE OF SOME THINGS.
SO REST FOR A BIT, THEN GO BACK TO CLASS.
CREAK
SCHOOL

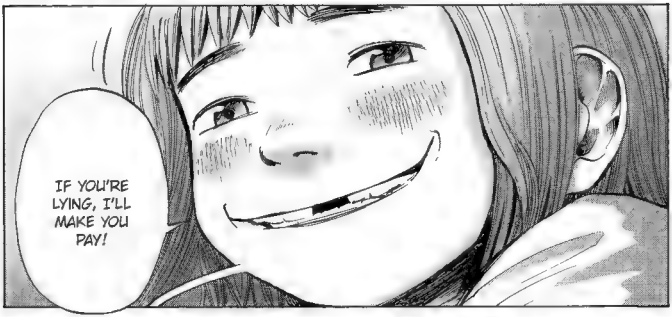
I FELL ON PURPOSE.
DO YOU KNOW WHY?
...
HMM...
YOU'RE NOT?
NUH
NUH
NUH
NUH
NUH
THIS WAS THE ONLY WAY TO BE ALONE WITH YOU.
I MEAN, YOU KEEP AVOIDING ME, PUNPUN.

OKAY, I BELIEVE YOU!
NOD NOD
I MEAN, I GUESS SO. YOU SAID YOU'D PROTECT ME, NO MATTER WHAT.
DO YOU LIKE ME, PUNPUN?


NOD
NOD
THEN...
...I LIKE YOU TOO, PUNPUN!

TWEET
TWEET
TWEET
TWEET
TWEET
PUNPUN, DID YOU KNOW THAT SONODA TOLD HARUMI SHE LIKED HIM?
THEY'RE GOING TO TOYOSHIMA AMUSEMENT PARK OVER SUMMER BREAK, JUST THE TWO OF THEM.
LOOK, SIR, A RAINBOW!
SO LUCKY ...
IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE AN AMUSEMENT PARK...
...BUT I WISH I COULD GO FAR AWAY, WHERE THERE'S NO ONE AROUND.
I'M NOT JEALOUS ...
NOT REALLY.
I DON'T CARE WHAT OTHER PEOPLE DO.
EVERY-ONE CAN DIE FOR ALL I CARE...
...AS LONG AS I HAVE YOU, PUNPUN!

AFTER ALL, YOU ADORE ME. RIGHT, PUNPUN?
FOR-EEEEVER AND EEEEVER ...
YOU'LL ONLY THINK ABOUT MAKING ME HAPPY, RIGHT?
RIGHT?!
AREN'T YOU GOING TO ANSWER?
HUH?
NO.



Punpun was at a loss for words, wondering about it.

Just how long did Aiko mean by "forever and ever"?

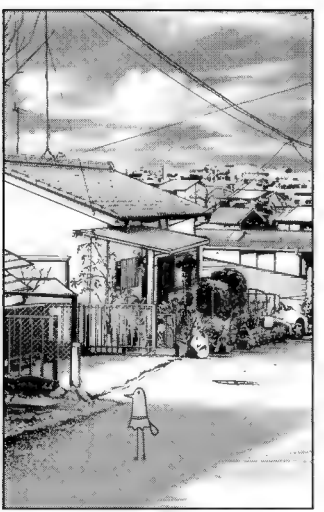
Punpun couldn't describe what he was feeling.
For the sake of expedi-ency, he would call it...

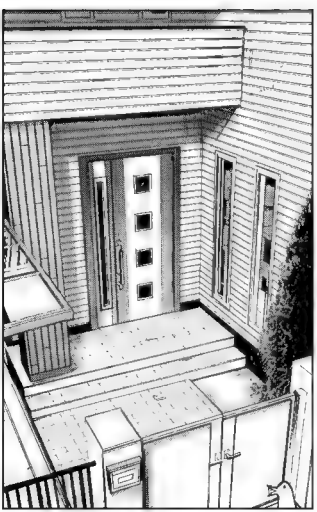
"Scared."

HARUMIN!
HARUMIN!
HEY, DID YOU GUYS ALREADY KISS?!

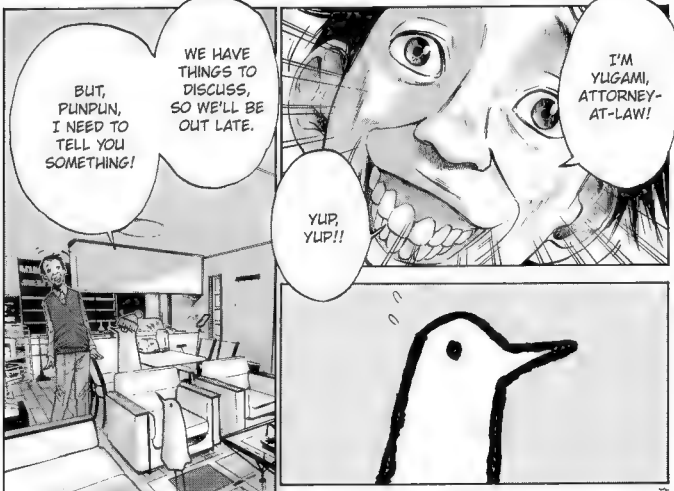
SHE DUMPED ME.
UHH...
WHAT?
IT'S EMBARRASSING— SHE DOESN'T WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW.
WE DIDN'T DO A THING, AND I GOT DUMPED IN HALF A DAY. ANY OTHER QUESTIONS?
GLOOM
SHE'S THE ONE WHO SAID SHE LIKED ME, SO WHAT DID SHE EXPECT FROM ME?
GIRLS ARE SCARY...
HEALTH CENTER GET OUT NOW!
SNIFF
CLENCH!
DAMN IT!

I'VE HAD IT WITH GIRLS!
IT'S JUST ME AND THE PWC!
P...
PWC!
PWC!
OH...
I MEAN, WITH YOU GUYS TOO, OF COURSE.
CRASH BUMPING RIDES
READY TO SQUEAL!!



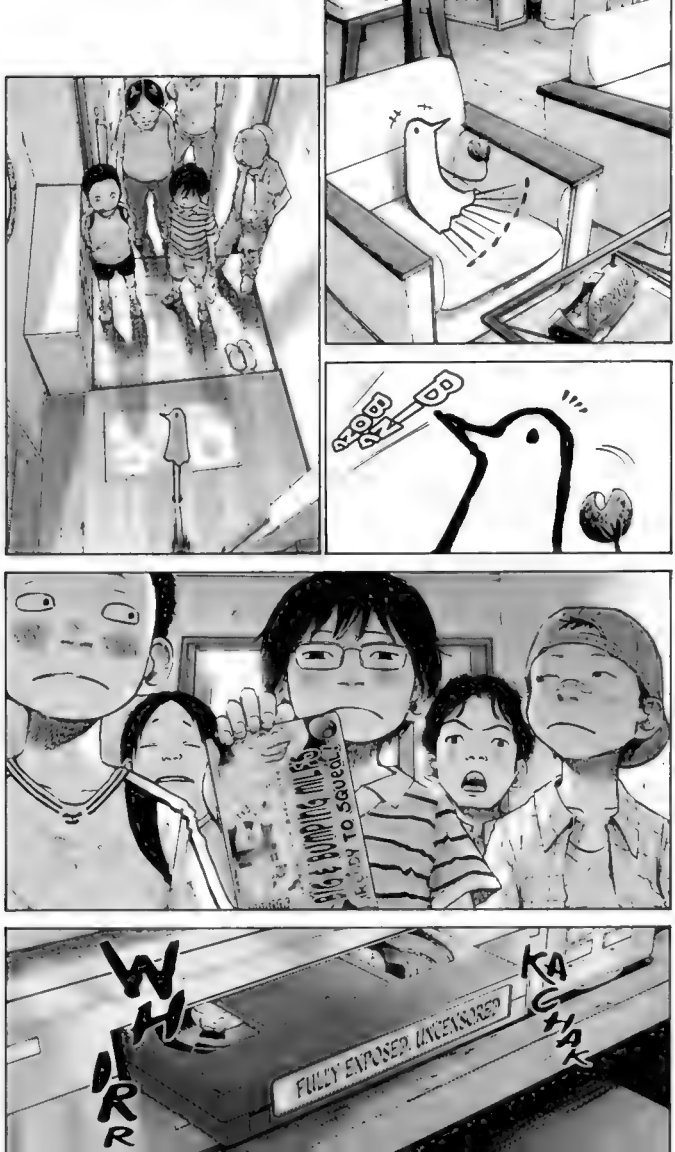


ER... LET ME INTRODUCE YOU.
THIS IS THE LAWYER WHO'S GOING TO HELP US...


I'M YUGAMI, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW!
YUP, YUP!!
WE HAVE THINGS TO DISCUSS, SO WE'LL BE OUT LATE.
BUT, PUNPUN, I NEED TO TELL YOU SOMETHING!

Chapter 8

FA
SH!
LIFE...
...IS FULL OF UPS AND DOWNS AND CLOWNS!
THERE ARE CHOCO PIES IN THE KITCHEN-EAT THOSE FOR DINNER.
HA HA HA
YUP
YUP


OZOBO
FIGHT BUMPING MICE!
READY TO SQUEAL!
WHIRR
KA CHAK
FULLY EXPOSED. UNCENSORED

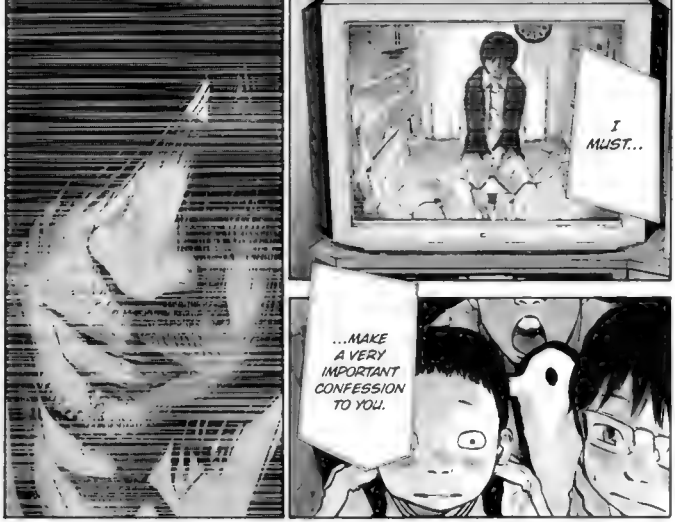
YOU'RE AS CUTE AS A DOLL.
HOW OLD ARE YOU?
I'M 18... HEE HEE.
YOU HAVE BIG BOOBS. WHAT CUP SIZE?
HEE HEE.
G-CUP.

SHLORP SCHLORP!
SHLURP! SHLURP!
NMMM ...
NMMM ...
KSSHH
SHK
SHK SHK
H-HUH? IT STOPPED ...

FASH
06:15:54
07/12

!!

HEY, KID... THE ONE WITH THE REMOTE CONTROL.
YOU DIDN'T PICK UP THIS VIDEO BY CHANCE...
DON'T FAST-FORWARD. LISTEN TO ME...
IT'S FATE. SO YOU HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO WATCH IT TO THE END.


I MUST...
...MAKE A VERY IMPORTANT CONFESSION TO YOU.

I...
...KILLED MY FAMILY WITH MY OWN HANDS.
IT'S NOT THAT I WAS UNHAPPY WITH MY LIFE.
NO. IN FACT, I SHOULD SAY THAT I WAS GRATEFUL ...

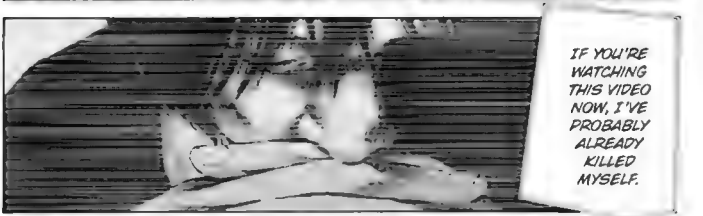
BUT THINK HARD.
THIS HAPPY FAMILY LIFE WITH NO WORRIES... IT'S AS FRAGILE AS PAPIER-MÂCHÉ.
MY FATHER DEDICATED MOST OF HIS LIFE TO HIS WORK, AND MY MOTHER DILIGENTLY RAISED HER KIDS.
MY OLDER SISTER MARRIED A CIVIL SERVANT LAST MONTH.
ONLY GOD KNOWS WHEN MISFORTUNE WILL STRIKE.
ILLNESS, ACCIDENTS, NATURAL DISASTERS, FIRES, BETRAYAL...
NEVER KNOWING WHEN YOU'LL GET KNOCKED DOWN AND GRASPING DESPERATELY AT WHAT LITTLE JOY AND HOPE YOU CAN FIND... CAN THAT REALLY BE HAPPINESS?
"I'M GOING TO ENJOY MY SECOND STAGE OF LIFE."
AND RIGHT AFTER THAT, HE FOUND OUT HE HAD CANCER.
WHEN MY DAD RETIRED, HE SAID...

I COULDN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE ...
EVERY-THING WAS JUST TOO SAD...
SO I KILLED THEM.
I FREED THEIR SOULS.
I...
I ACTED OUT OF LOVE.
AND...
AND YET...

...EVERY NIGHT, HE COMES TO ME IN MY DREAMS.
MY FATHER STANDS THERE...
...STARING DOWN AT ME.
WAS I WRONG?
OR IS THIS JUST GUILT?
I DON'T KNOW...
HOW DO I FEEL NOW ...?
I'LL SHOW YOU WITH A DANCE.
AIEEE!
I DON'T UNDER-STAND! ♪ I DON'T GET IT! ♪
I DON'T GET IT! ♪ I DON'T UNDER-STAND! ♪

I DON'T UNDER-STAND! ♪ I DON'T GET IT! ♪
I DON'T GET IT! ♪ I DON'T UNDER-STAND! ♪
I'M NOT DANCING BECAUSE I'M MAD!
DAMN!
!!
I'M CONFESSING BECAUSE I WANT SOCIETY TO QUESTION WHAT HAPPINESS IS.
ANYWAY, I'VE HAD IT...

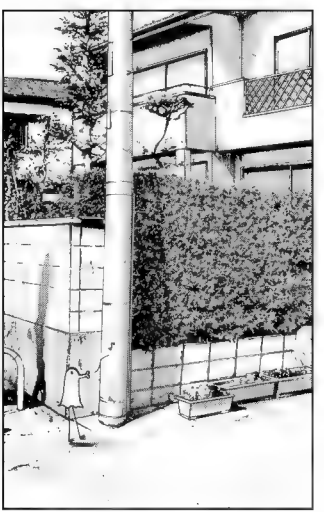
I'VE ALSO LEFT SOME CASH, ENOUGH TO BE WORTH YOUR COURAGE.
THERE'S AN ABANDONED M'SO FACTORY ON THE ROAD TO K TOWN. I'VE HIDDEN THE BODIES THERE, THREE OF THEM.
SO I WANT YOU TO FIND THE BODIES AND LEAK IT TO THE MEDIA.

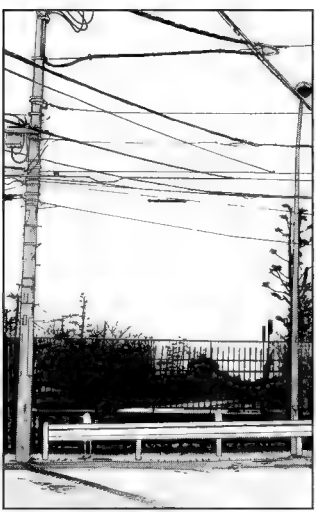

IF YOU'RE WATCHING THIS VIDEO NOW, I'VE PROBABLY ALREADY KILLED MYSELF.

SK
SK
SK
SK
KSSSHH
DOP
I'M COUNTING ON YOUR BRAVERY AND CURIOSITY ...

AW MAN, WHAT A JOKE!
FINDING THE TAPE JUST LYING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STREET WAS SUSPICIOUS, RIGHT?
THIS IS SICK.
I FEEL LIKE BEATING UP SHIMIZU.
HE'S MESSING WITH US, DAMMIT!
UH, WELL ...
MAYBE WE SHOULD LEAVE...
UH... NO, I'M GOOD.

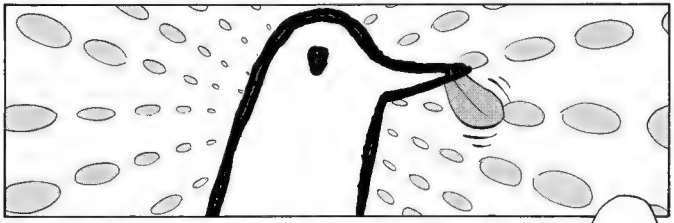
I'M BACK.
WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOU DON'T LOOK SO GOOD.
WELL, I RENTED INDEPENDENCE DAY AT THE VIDEO STORE...
VIDEO HELL
...SO LET'S HAVE A GOOD LAUGH TOGETHER!
MEOW!
HUH? WHAT'S WITH THE WEIRD DANCING?
I DON'T UNDER-STAND!
I DON'T UNDER-STAND!
I DON'T UNDER-STAND!
I DON'T UNDER-STAND!





Chapter 9

WELCOME HOME, PUNPUN.
I CAN'T DECIDE IF I SHOULD DO MEDIUM OR MILD CURRY.
ARE YOU OKAY WITH MEDIUM?



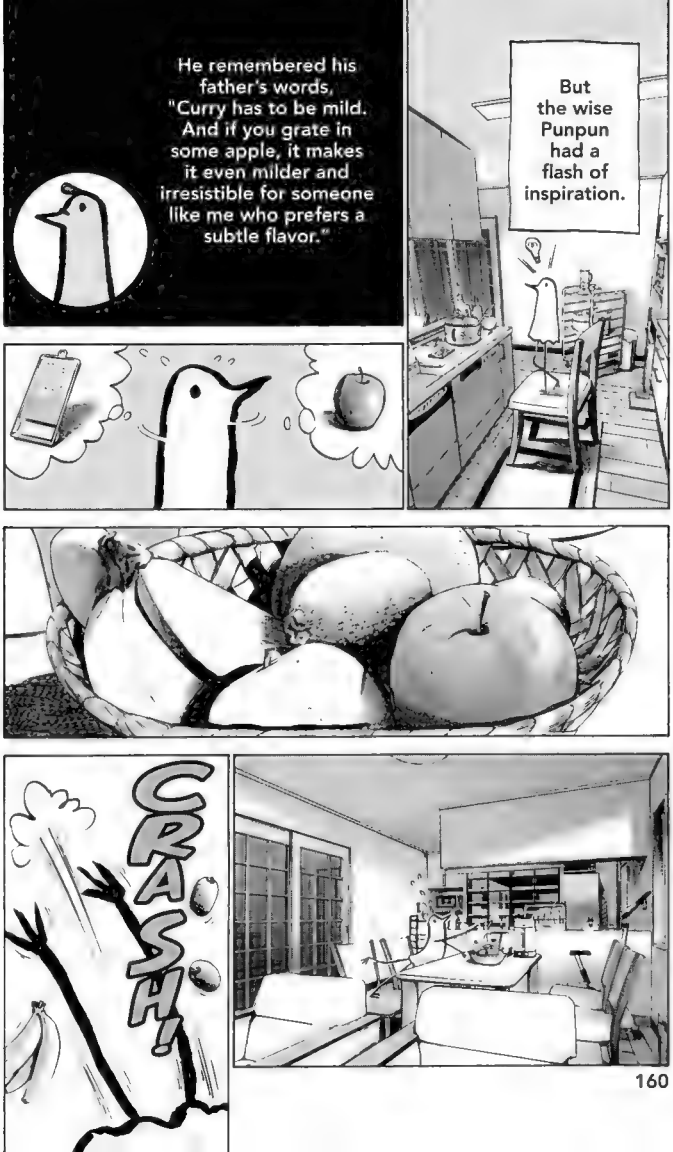
BING
BONG
WHAT ...?
YOU WANT SPICY?!
A BOLD CHOICE!

SO WE'RE SELLING OUR PRODUCTS.
...AND THAT'S WHY WE WANT EVERYONE TO HAVE A HAPPY AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLE.
WE'RE NOT PEDDLING SOME STRANGE RELIGION.
OH NO, NO.
HMM...
AND...
...THAT THING ON YOUR SHIRT IS YOUR GOD?
WHAT?
IN FACT, WE BELIEVE THE SUSPICIOUS NATURE THAT LED YOU TO SUCH A CONCLUSION IS PROOF OF YOUR POOR HEALTH.
COSMO HEALTH CENTER

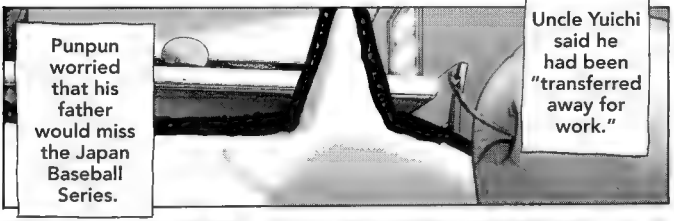
SEE? PEOPLE WITH POOR HEALTH LOSE THEIR ABILITY TO SMILE.
PEOPLE WHO LOSE THEIR SMILE LOSE THEIR HAPPINESS.
SO YOU'RE SAYING I'M UNHAPPY?
I WOULDN'T WANT A SMILE PLASTERED ON MY FACE LIKE YOU.
EXCUSE ME, BUT...
WHAT ARE YOU HAVING FOR DINNER TONIGHT?
WE'RE HAVING CURRY.
WELL, THEN!
PLEASE USE THIS WATER! IT'S GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH, AND IT'LL MAKE YOUR CURRY MUCH MORE DELICIOUS!
HMM...

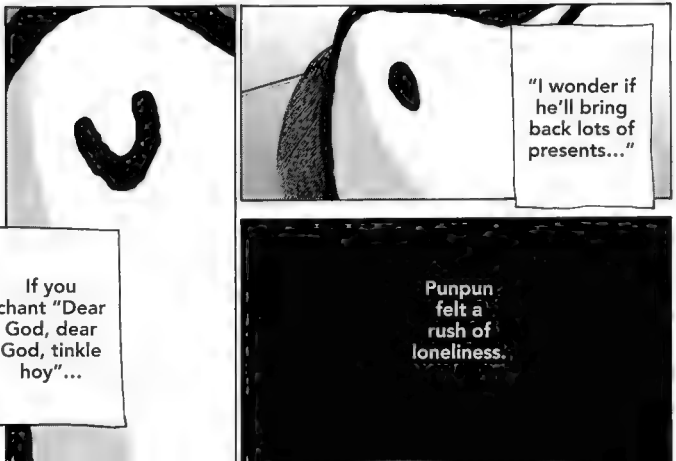
A 1.5-LITER BOTTLE IS $42.
A CASE OF TEN BOTTLES IS $32 PER BOTTLE, MUCH CHEAPER!
UNIVERSE COSMO WATER
UNIVERSE COSMO WATER
THAT'S STILL WAY TOO EXPENSIVE!
SNORT
OH NO, NO!
THE PRODUCT IS REALLY, REALLY GREAT!
THE DOCTOR HAS DILIGENTLY IMBUED EVERY BOTTLE WITH POWER...
H-H-HOLD IT!
WHAT *POWER*?! WHAT POWER DOES THE DOCTOR HAVE?!

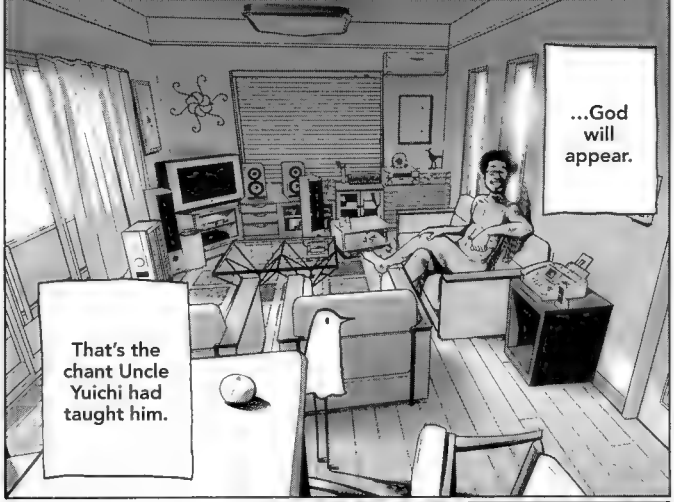
Actually, Punpun can't eat spicy foods, so he said that to make Uncle Yuichi happy.


He remembered his father's words, "Curry has to be mild. And if you grate in some apple, it makes it even milder and irresistible for someone like me who prefers a subtle flavor."
But the wise Punpun had a flash of inspiration.
CRASH!

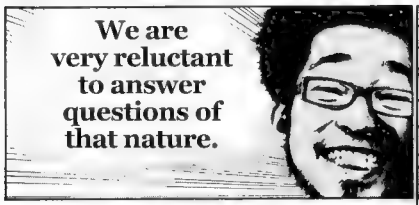
His father hadn't been home for more than a month.

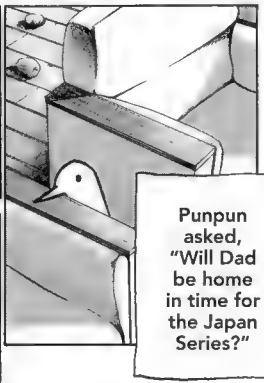

Punpun worried that his father would miss the Japan Baseball Series.
Uncle Yuichi said he had been "transferred away for work."


If you chant "Dear God, dear God, tinkle hoy"...
"I wonder if he'll bring back lots of presents..."
Punpun felt a rush of loneliness.

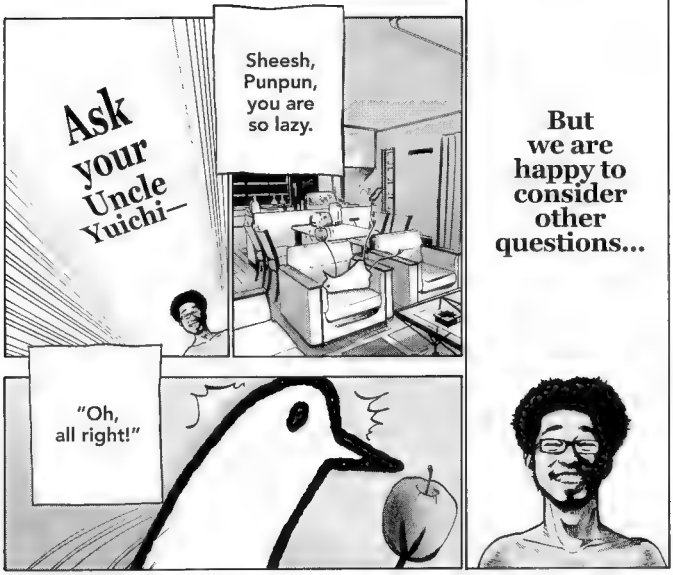

That's the chant Uncle Yuichi had taught him.
...God will appear.

Howdy, Punpun! Did you want something?


We are very reluctant to answer questions of that nature.


Punpun asked, "Will Dad be home in time for the Japan Series?"

"Meanie," thought Punpun angrily.

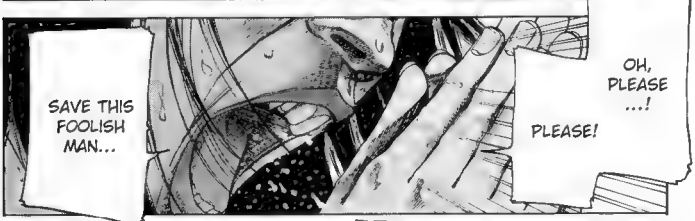

Ask your Uncle Yuichi—
Sheesh, Punpun, you are so lazy.
"Oh, all right!"
But we are happy to consider other questions...

SHWAA
MIN
MIN
MIN

LET ME BE CLEAR...
I'M NOT SAYING THAT RELIGION IS BAD.
IT'S FINE WITH ME IF YOU BELIEVE YOUR GOD WILL SAVE YOU!
BUT I'M SAYING YOU SHOULDN'T SHOVE YOUR BELIEFS ON OTHER PEOPLE!
PLEASE CALM DOWN...
SHUT UP!
YIKES!
J-JUST COMPARE IT TO WATER FROM YOUR FAUCET...
YOU'RE SO ANXIOUS AND WOUND UP.
YOU'RE LONELY, AREN'T YOU?!

I...
...AM FINE LIVING BY MYSELF!
AND IF NECESSARY, I'LL KICK OTHER PEOPLE OUT OF MY WAY!
ISN'T THAT HOW HUMAN NATURE WORKS?!
OH...
OH...
THE WORLD OVERFLOWS WITH SADNESS BECAUSE OF PEOPLE LIKE YOU.
EVERY THREE SECONDS, A CHILD DIES FROM HUNGER SOMEWHERE IN THE WORLD.
AND THE ENVIRONMENT IS NEARLY DESTROYED...
YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT!
I'M JUST A DISGUSTING MACHINE THAT CONTINUOUSLY PRODUCES GARBAGE AND SHIT!

EEEK!
IF HUMANITY GOES EXTINCT, IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT!
FINE!
THEN THE WORLD IS MINE!


OH, PLEASE ...!
PLEASE!
SAVE THIS FOOLISH MAN...

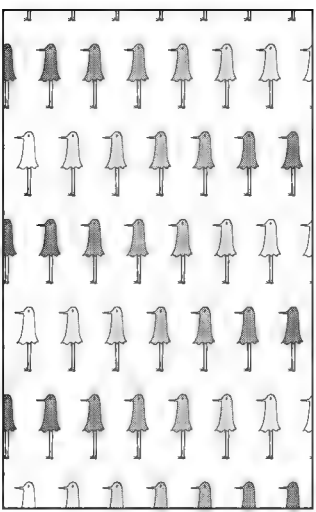
AH HA! SEE!
SHAKA SHAKA SHAKA
THOSE ARE THE LIPS OF GOD, HUH?!
YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELF, KID. DON'T LOOK SO SMUG!

JUST...
...JUST FIVE MINUTES!
NO, THREE MINUTES! LET ME PRAY FOR YOUR HAPPINESS!
NO THANKS!
NOT ON YOUR LIFE!
SEI!
SEI!
SEI!
HEY, CUT THAT OUT!
AND LISTEN REAL GOOD TO WHAT I'M ABOUT TO SAY!
THERE IS...
PEEK

...NO GOD!
"Dear God, dear God, tinkle hoy."
That was the chant Uncle Yuichi had taught Punpun three years ago.

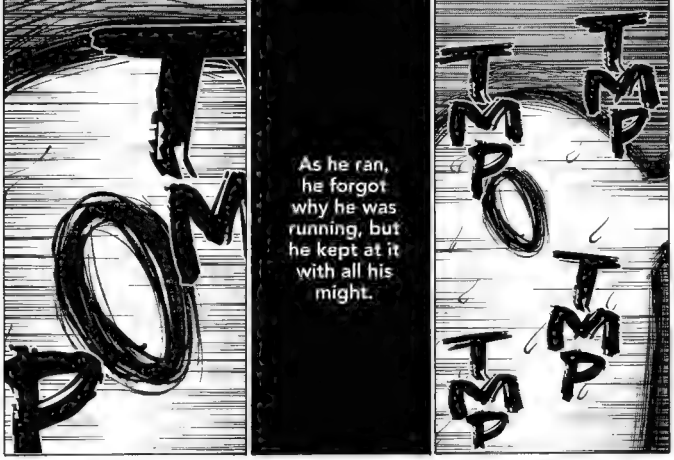
OH...
PU...
PUNPUN...
COSMO
COSMO

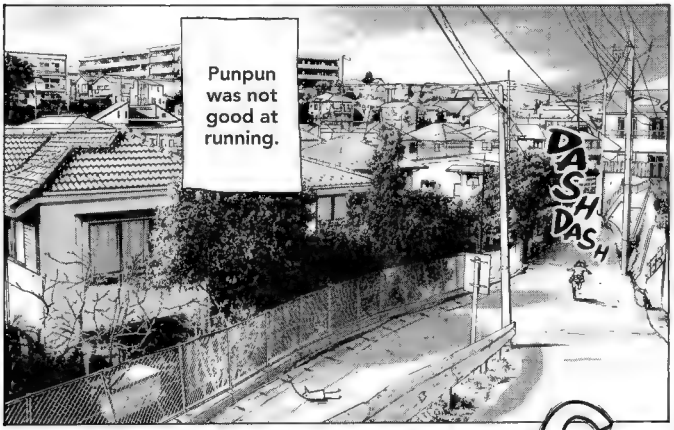
"Aiko!"

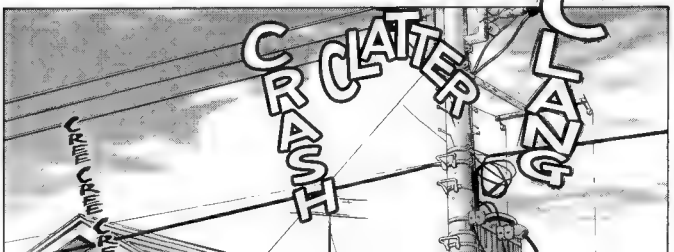


Chapter 10

In a drastically uncharacteristic manner, Punpun dashed after her.


TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
As he ran, he forgot why he was running, but he kept at it with all his might.


Punpun was not good at running.
DASH
DASH
DASH


CLANG
CLATTER
CRASH
CREE
CREE

Ugwuu Ugwuu Ugwuu

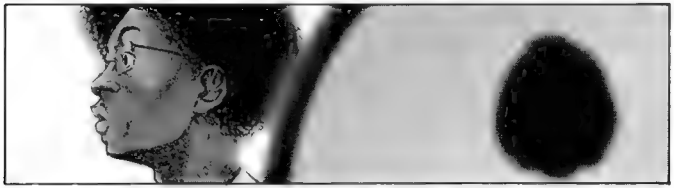
Aiko!
I KNOW LOTS OF LAWYERS, SO YOU'LL LOSE IF YOU TRY TO SUE ME...
IT'S NOT MY FAULT...
YOU CAME CHARGING INTO ME.

IT'S DIFFERENT!
WANT TO WALK TOGETHER?
IS THIS THE WAY YOU GO HOME?
IT'S DIFFER-ENT...
YOUR HOUSE..
...IS IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION THAN THE TIME WE WALKED HOME TOGETHER.

HEY.
SH
OVE
WHY?
HEY!
SAY SOME-THING.
WHY DID YOU LIE?
I SAID, SAY SOMETHING!
MI-IN
MI-IN
MI-IN
MI-IN

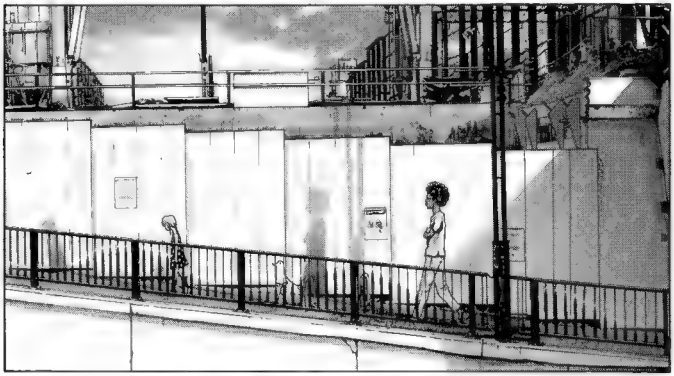
I...
I NEVER WANTED ANYONE FROM SCHOOL TO SEE THIS...
I TRANS-FERRED...
...AND I THOUGHT *THIS TIME* I COULD BE FRIENDS WITH EVERYONE.
I BET YOU'LL SAY THE SAME THING.
THAT I'M A FREAK...
THAT I'M WEIRD ...
NUH UH
NUH UH

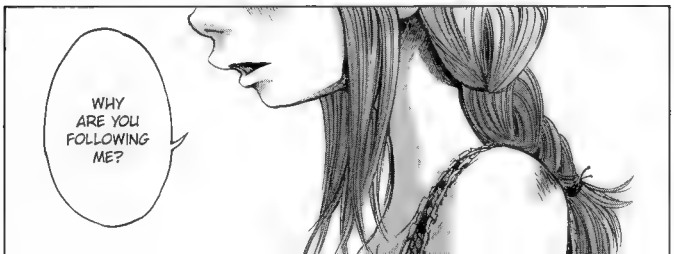
I DON'T BELIEVE YOU ANY-MORE.



BYE.
THIS SUCKS.
FORGET IT.

I WISH I COULD GO SOMEPLACE FAR AWAY...
SOMEPLACE WHERE NO ONE KNOWS ME...

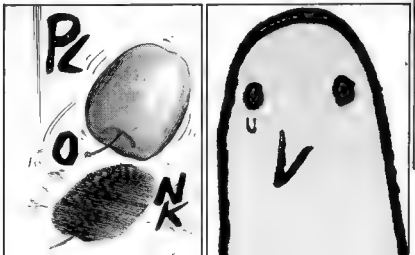



WHY ARE YOU FOLLOWING ME?

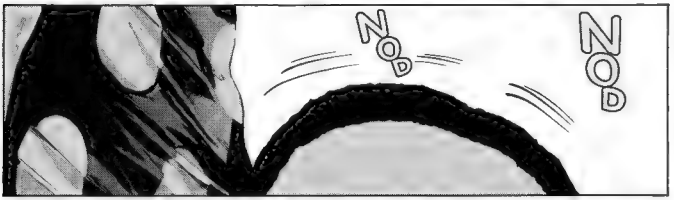
I'M GOING TO MY UNCLE'S PLACE IN KAGOSHIMA.
KAGO-SHIMA IS REALLY FAR.
I WONDER IF I CAN WALK THERE BY MYSELF.
HE'S A RICH DOCTOR AND HE DOESN'T BELIEVE IN WEIRD GODS, SO HE'LL HELP ME.
JUST KIDDING.
I'M JUST GOING HOME LIKE USUAL.

Punpun proudly declared, "I'll win the Nobel Prize. Then we can go and live on Planet Punpun!"

Punpun thought that if Aiko said so, he must be crazy.

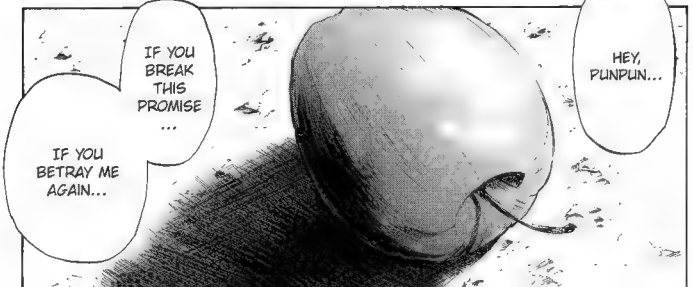


...Punpun asked Aiko.
"Where is Kagoshima anyway?"
PUN-PUN...
WILL YOU COME WITH ME?
NOD

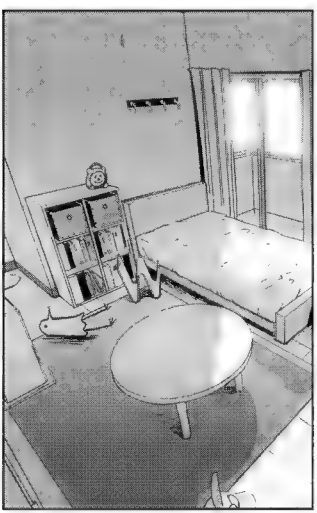


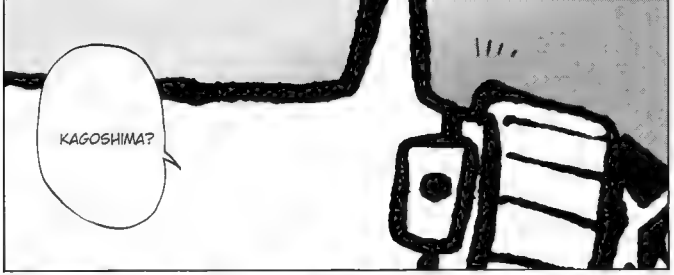
It felt like Aiko would go far, far away if he let go...

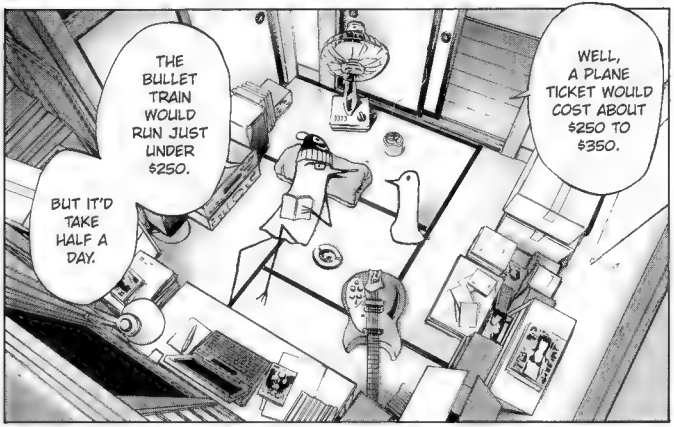
...so Punpun held her hand as hard as he could.



Punpun promised Aiko that he would go with her to Kagoshima after school ended for the semester.

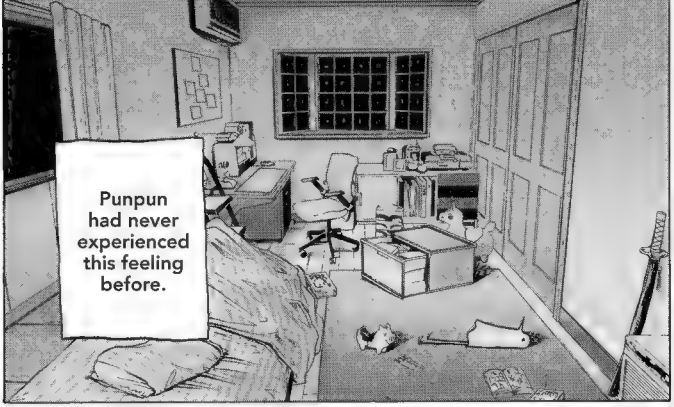



KAGOSHIMA?


WELL, A PLANE TICKET WOULD COST ABOUT $250 TO $350.
THE BULLET TRAIN WOULD RUN JUST UNDER $250.
BUT IT'D TAKE HALF A DAY.

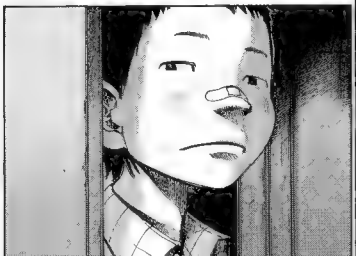
HUH? WALKING?
AH HA HA! THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE.
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'RE TADATAKA INOU!

Chapter 11


Punpun had never experienced this feeling before.

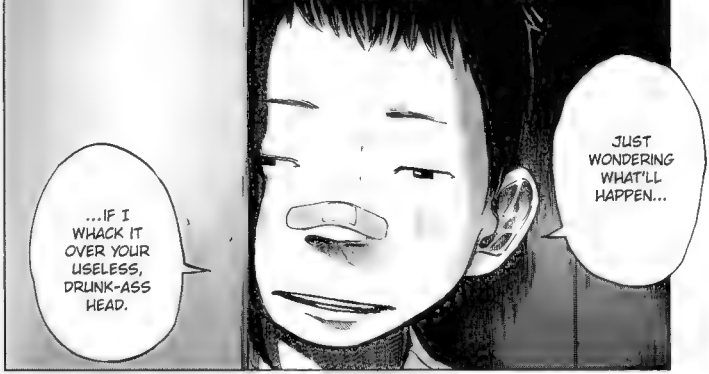
Hope.

We're closed indefinitely.
-Seki

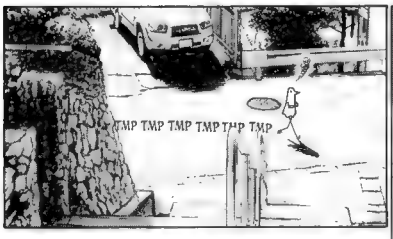


SEKI BENTO
お弁当の関
SOBA
CHIRP
CHIRP

HEY, DAD, AREN'T YOU STARTING A NEW JOB TODAY?
SHUT UP. EVEN I HAVE ENOUGH SAVED UP SO I DON'T HAVE TO WORK LIKE A SLAVE DAY IN AND DAY OUT.
DON'T ACT LIKE YOU'RE COOL.
YOU'RE JUST HIDING AGAIN, AREN'T YOU?
YOU SHOULD TALK. AND WHAT'S WITH THAT BAT IN YOUR HAND?
YOU MAKE MOM WORK SO HARD AND YOU JUST DON'T CARE?


JUST WONDERING WHAT'LL HAPPEN...
...IF I WHACK IT OVER YOUR USELESS, DRUNK-ASS HEAD.

NOTHING.
BUT YOU'LL DESTROY YOUR WHOLE LIFE.


TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP

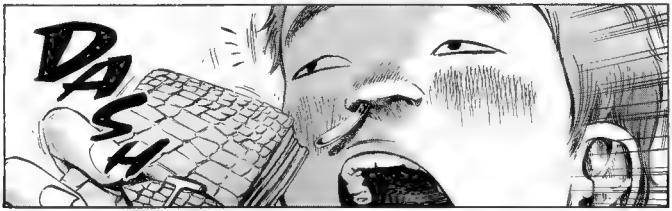
COME ON, DAD...
HURRY UP AND REOPEN THE SHOP.

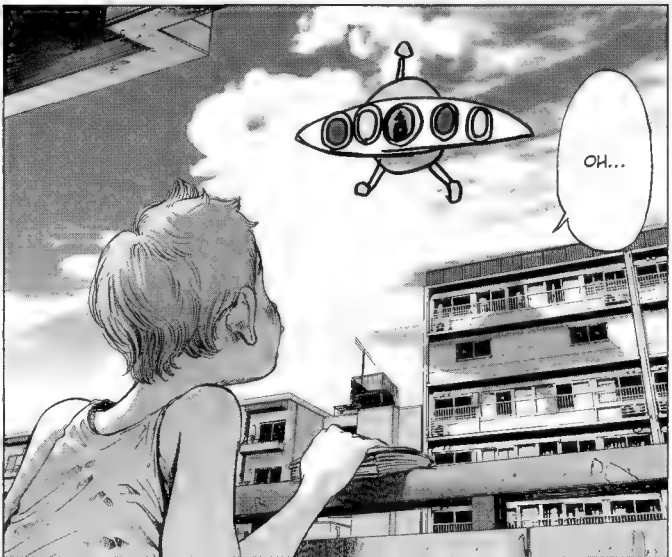
405
SHIMIZU

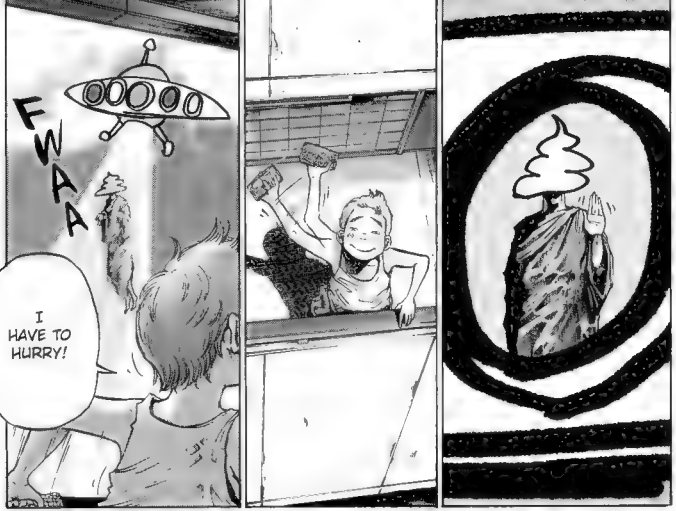
KOH!
KOH!
SUKI
SUKI
BAVE
BAVE
Magic
The man who's always watching
Midori the hermit
POOP
GOD

STOP DRAWING THOSE NASTY PICTURES AND GO TO THE STORE FOR ME!
WHAT? ARE YOU LAUGHING AT ME?
I'VE NEVER BEEN SO INSULTED!
GYA HA HA!

DASH
I'M GOING!
BE CAREFUL!


DASH


OH...


FWAA
I HAVE TO HURRY!

FWAAAA
駐車
PARK

How've you been?
Hello, Shimi.

THE KAMEHAMEHA TECHNIQUE YOU SHOWED ME DIDN'T WORK.
What's the matter?
Shimi... Were you paying attention?
I never said a word about Kamehameha.
Now, close your eyes.
I bestowed upon you intelligence and power, Shimi.

If you use them properly ...
...you will be able to do anything.
Should they be used to destroy things?
Should they be used to hurt people?
SHIMIZU ...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

THE POOP GOD SAID...
...I CAN DO ANYTHING!
WHACK
WHEN ARE YOU GONNA STOP TALKING NONSENSE?
I'VE KNOWN YOU SINCE KINDERGARTEN...
GET YOURSELF TOGETHER.
BY THE WAY, CAN YOU LOAN ME SOME MONEY?
I'M HAVING A ROUGH TIME RIGHT NOW.

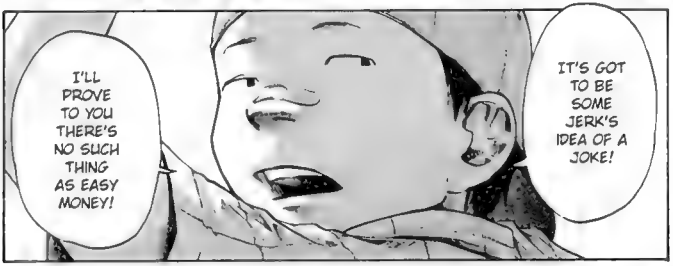
...
IDIOT! DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING PEOPLE TELL YOU!
...
YEAH, SURE.
駐車
PARKING SPACE
OH...
PUNPUN ...
HARUMIN, PUNPUN IS LATE.
NEVER MIND HIM, KOMATSU... I'M WORRIED.
ABOUT WHAT?
ELEVEN

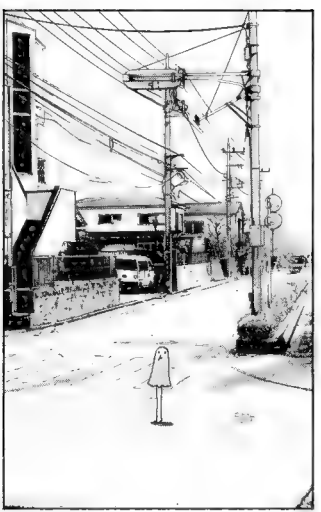
ABOUT THE PWC VIDEO WE WATCHED AT PUNPUN'S HOUSE!
NOT HER! UGH!
THAT WEIRD GUY WHO CUT IN AND TALKED ABOUT THE MISO FACTORY!
HUH? YOU MEAN THAT FAT LADY?
THAT'S RIGHT... HE SAID THERE'S CASH THERE EQUAL TO OUR COURAGE...
HEY, KOMATSU.
IF... WHAT IF THERE'S, LIKE, A MILLION BUCKS? WHAT WOULD YOU BUY WITH IT?

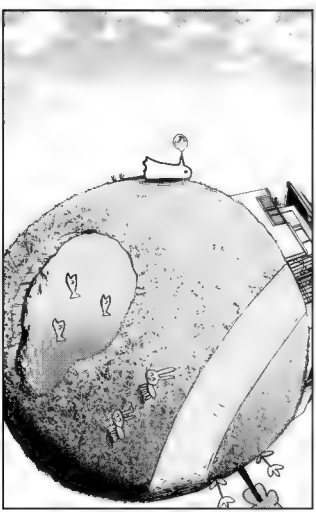
EXACTLY! AND THAT'S THE PROBLEM, KOMATSU!
...I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE THE MISO FACTORY IS.
BUT...
I KNOW WHERE IT IS.
WANT ME TO TAKE YOU?
OH, SEKI. HOW LONG'VE YOU BEEN STANDING THERE?
OH, SHIMI'S HERE TOO.
BUT, SEKI, YOU SAID IT WAS JUST A PRANK.
At that moment, a lightbulb went off in Punpun's head.

Kago-
shima
Money
Miso
factory
Need
to pee
Home-
work
Choco
pie

HUH?
PUNPUN, YOU'RE INTERESTED TOO?
WWAAP
OKAY, IT'S DECIDED. LET'S GO AND LOOK.

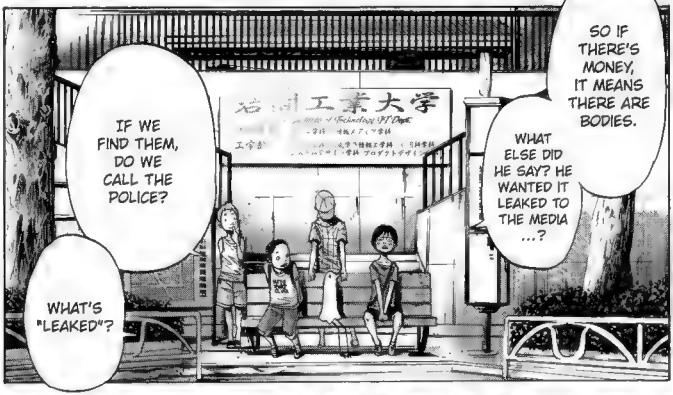

IT'S GOT TO BE SOME JERK'S IDEA OF A JOKE!
I'LL PROVE TO YOU THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS EASY MONEY!



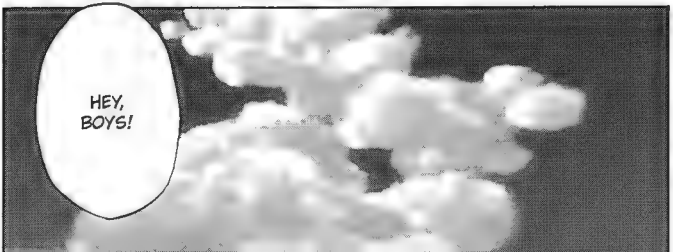


Because if they found money at the factory...

Punpun placed all his hopes and dreams on the miso factory.


IF WE FIND THEM, DO WE CALL THE POLICE?
WHAT'S "LEAKED"?
WHAT ELSE DID HE SAY? HE WANTED IT LEAKED TO THE MEDIA ...?
SO IF THERE'S MONEY, IT MEANS THERE ARE BODIES.

"Aiko won't kill me!"



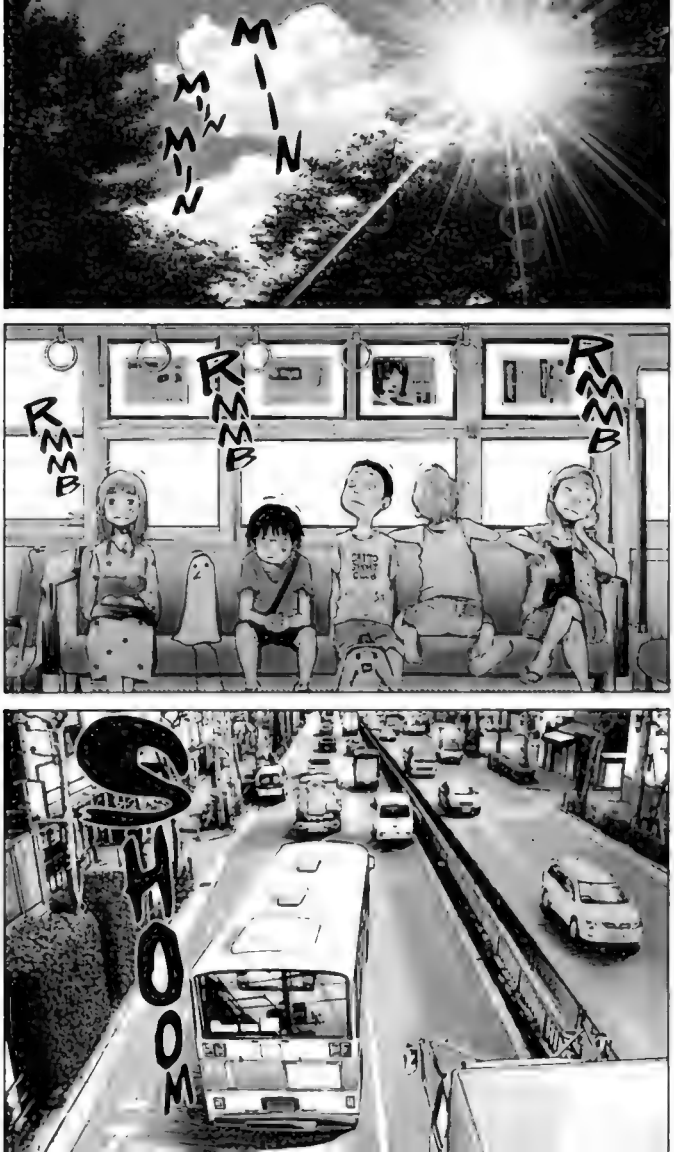
WHAT'RE YOU UP TO?!

"It's Aiko!"

N-NO!
WE'RE JUST DOING A DARE! WE'RE GONNA CHALLENGE EACH OTHER!
SO YOU WON'T TELL US? DOES THAT MEAN YOU'RE UP TO NO GOOD?
GIRLS ARE ALWAYS SO NOSY!
NOTHING... BESIDES, IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!

REALLY?
THAT'S SO CHILDISH! I'M SORRY I ASKED.
WE'RE GOING TO THE TANABATA FESTIVAL!
YEAH!
WELL, GOOD FOR YOU.
I...
...THINK I'LL GO WATCH THE DARE.
HUH?! WHY, AIKO?!
SAITO SPORT CLUB
WE WERE GOING TO GO BUY SHIMUTAKU STUFF TOGETHER!

YOU DON'T MIND, DO YOU, PUNPUN?
ERR! GIRLS CAN'T GO!
BECAUSE... YOU KNOW... THEY'RE GONNA BE ROUGH CHALLENGES.
I WASN'T ASKING YOU.
MIN
MIN
MIN
MIN
MIN


MIIN
MIIN
MIIN
RMMB
RMMB
RMMB
SHOOM

WE HAVE TO WALK FROM HERE.
SHWA
SHWA
SHWA
SHWA
VROOM
VROOM
PUT
PUT
VRM
BUT I KNOW A SHORT-CUT.
TMP
TMP
HEY, SEKI... I'VE BEEN MEANING TO ASK.
HUH?
HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT A MISO FACTORY SO FAR AWAY FROM TOWN?

I USED TO COME HERE BY MYSELF TO PLAY.
YOU JUST TRANSFERRED TO OUR SCHOOL, SO YOU PROBABLY DON'T KNOW...
ANYWAY, WE USED TO HAVE A BENTO SHOP.
THE OWNER OF THE MISO FACTORY AND MY DAD WERE FRIENDS OR WHATEVER.
DAD USED TO MAKE ME HELP OUT ON WEEKENDS...
ANYWAY, THE MISO FACTORY WENT BANKRUPT, AND THAT DRAGGED US DOWN TOO.

I COULDN'T CARE LESS IF THERE'S MONEY THERE OR NOT.
I JUST WANT TO FIND OUT IF THIS IS REAL.
I HATE LIARS.

MAYBE I SHOULDN'T HAVE ASKED?
SHH...
SHHA
SHHA
SHHA

POIK
SHOOM
SHWA
SHWA
SHWA
SHWA
SHWA
SHWA
SHWA
SHWA
SHWA
ひもの製造直売
DRIED FISH
BUY DIRECT
SHWAWA

JJJJJJ
SHWA
SHWA
SHWA
NO
TRESPASSING
KEEP
OUT
TOMP
WE CLIMB THIS.

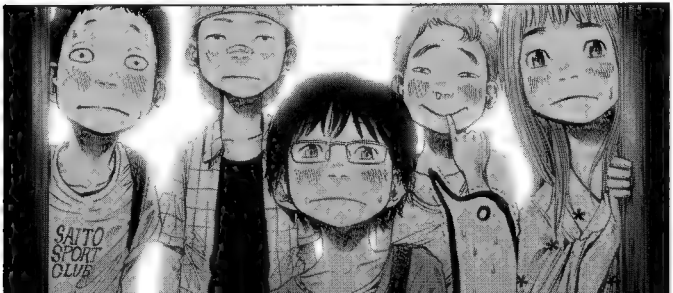
GO, TIGERS, GO!
TOM?
WE MADE IT!

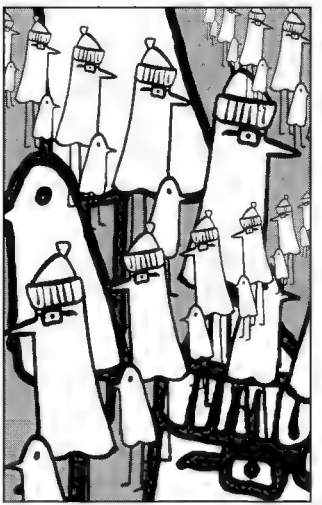
IT'S... HUGE.
AND SO QUIET...
IT'S SCARIER THAN I EXPECTED.

UMM...

IS THAT... BLOOD?
C-COME HERE, GUYS!
SHHH...
I HEAR A SOUND...
After coming all that way, Punpun realized something awful.

"I really need to pee!"

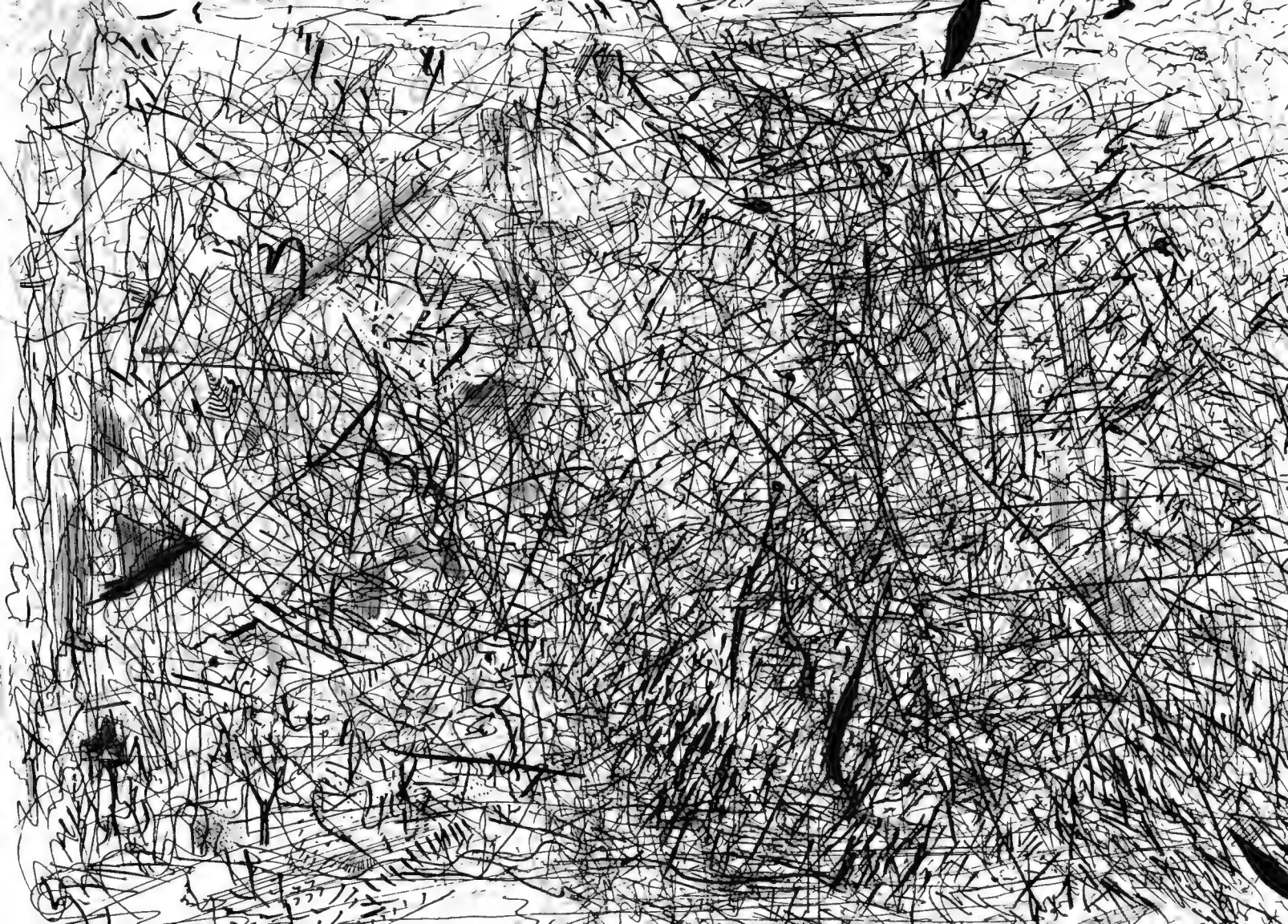




GOODNIGHT PUNPUN INIO ASANO

Part One

BACKGROUND ASSISTANTS Yuki Toribuchi
Satsuki Sato
CG ASSISTANT Hisashi Saito
COOPERATION Kumatsuto
Yasumasa Iwama



GOODNIGHT PUNPUN

Part Two

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Punpun realized something awful.

"I really need to pee!!"

GRAB
PUNPUN ...
SPRONG
Punpun had absolutely no idea what was going on.

HEY...
WHO SAID YOU COULD BE IN HERE?
Punpun desperately clenched to hold it in.
PEEEEE!
JOLT

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL KIDS?

I WAS FINALLY GOING TO CHASE THEM AWAY TODAY.
SOMETIMES THE LOCAL PUNKS COME HERE TO HAVE SEX, WHICH TOTALLY PISSES ME OFF.
HUH, SORRY.

UMM ...
SO WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE...?
THE SIGN SAYS "NO TRESPASSING," BUT I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYONE, YOU KNOW, OFFICIAL.
WHAAT?! WHAT ARE YOU ALL SCARED OF? IT'S OKAY!

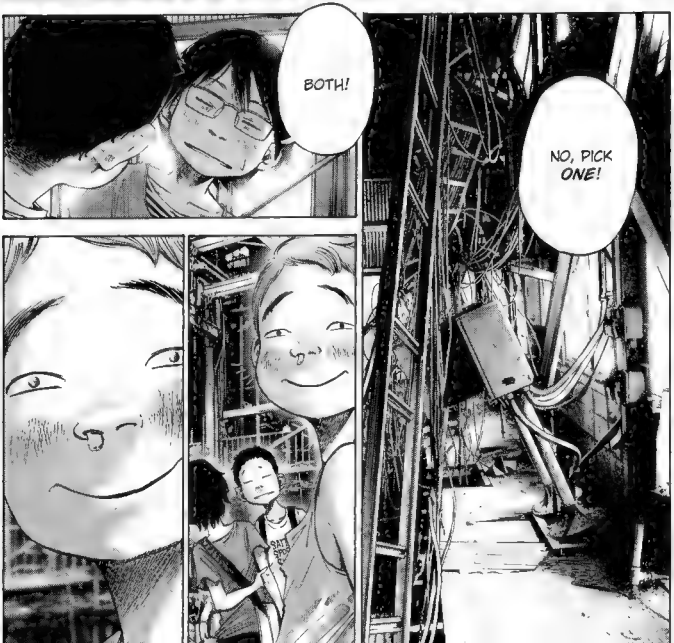
ME?
NOTHING REALLY. I MEAN, I JUST LIKE TO HANG OUT HERE.
NO, I MEAN...
THERE'S BLOOD ON YOUR FACE...
OH, THAT... MY DAD'S A LITTLE VIOLENT.
SCRUB
SCRUB
SCRUB
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. IT HAPPENS ALL THE TIME.
ANY-HOO... I DON'T MIND YOU PLAYING HERE, BUT DON'T MAKE A MESS, OKAY?
THIS PLACE IS, LIKE, SPECIAL TO ME, GOT IT?
SAITO SPORT CLUB
AND, OH YEAH...
DRAWING BLOCK

GO HOME BEFORE IT GETS DARK, OKAY?
IT'S PRETTY DANGER-OUS HERE WITH ALL THE RUSTY METAL AND STUFF ...
PLUS, I HEARD THE DUDE WHO OWNED THE FACTORY...
...WENT BROKE AND BURNED HIMSELF TO DEATH...
...SO NOW HE HANGS AROUND HERE ALL "BOOOO!"
AS IF.
LATERS.

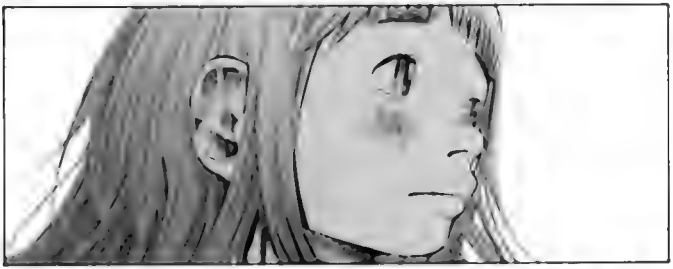
But he looked for the bodies and money with everyone else.

To be honest, Punpun really wanted to go home.

HEY, HARUMIN, WHAT'S SCARIER, DEAD BODIES OR GHOSTS?
BOTH.

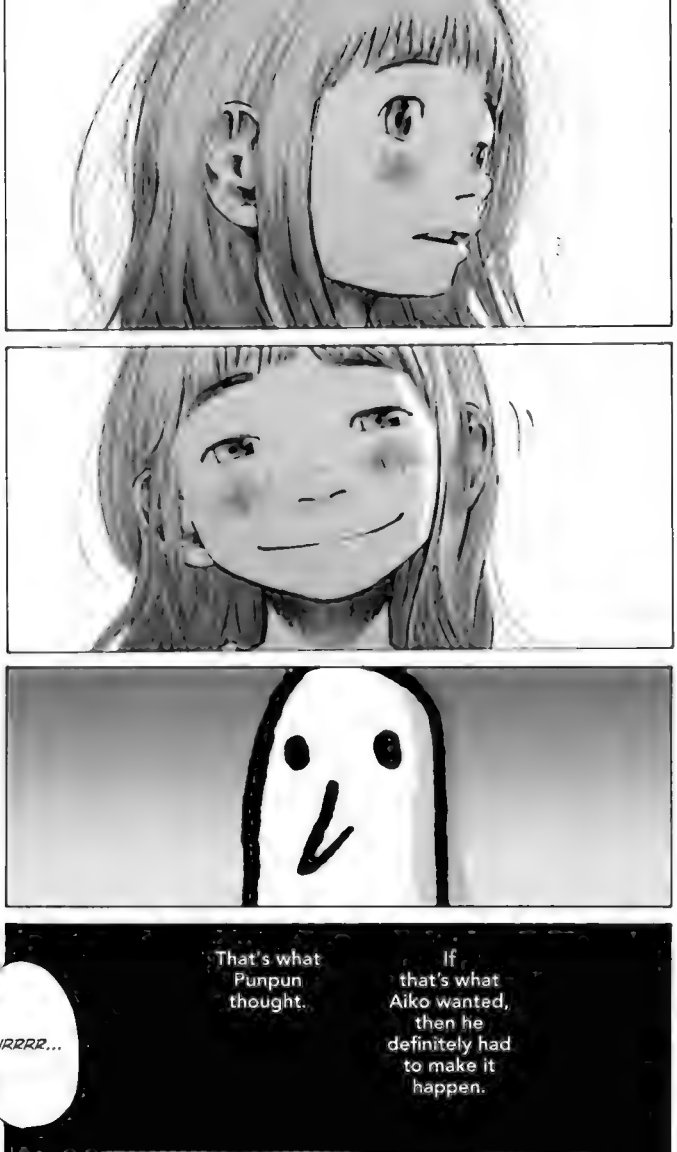

BOTH!
NO, PICK ONE!

Punpun was petrified of both dead bodies and ghosts, but he thought he should man up.



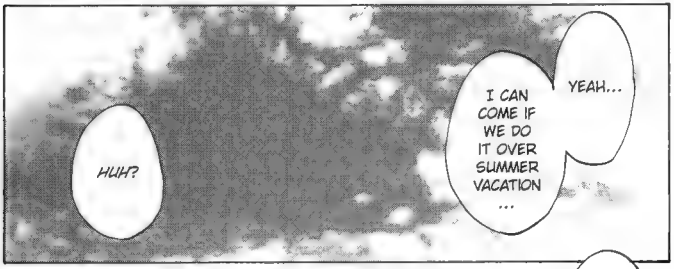
That was a definite, absolute promise.

Because he was going to take Aiko to Kagoshima.


That's what Punpun thought.
If that's what Aiko wanted, then he definitely had to make it happen.
URRRR...

I WONDER IF IT WAS A HOAX, AFTER ALL?
THERE'S NOTHING ANYWHERE ...
"Oh, that's just terrible!"
...Punpun shouted in his head.
HM? UH, YEAH ...
BUT... BUT...
BUT NO NEED TO GO INTO DETAILS NOW.
HEY, HARUMI...
I THOUGHT YOU GUYS WERE HERE ON A DARE? OR ARE YOU LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?

TODAY WAS PRETTY FUN...
...SO MAYBE IT'S BETTER THIS WAY.
WE SHOULD COME BACK HERE AGAIN...
IF WE BRING PAINTBALL GUNS FOR A SURVIVAL GAME, IT'LL BE TOTALLY FUN!


YEAH...
I CAN COME IF WE DO IT OVER SUMMER VACATION ...
HUH?

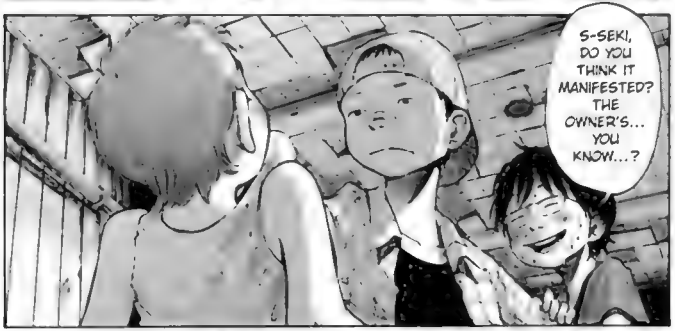
WELL, I'M...
...MOVING AT THE BEGINNING OF NEXT TERM.

REALLY?
YOU'RE MOVING, HARUMIN?
YEAH.
BUT YOU KNOW, JUST THE NEXT TOWN OVER!
MUCH CLOSER THAN THE STATES!
AND WE'LL HANG OUT...
...WHEN-EVER WE WANT...
YEAH.
OH... THAT'S RIGHT!
I STILL HAVE THE CORN CHIPS WE WERE EATING ON THE BUS!
DO YOU WANT SOME? YOU DO, RIGHT?

CRAP ...
THEY'RE ALREADY STALE.

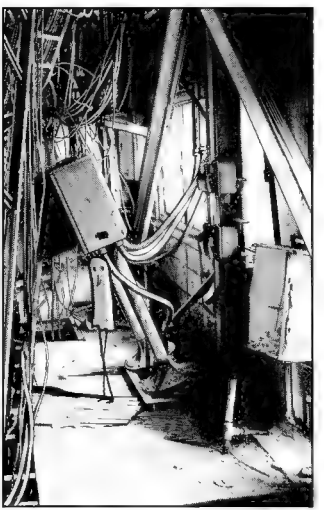
IF WE FIND A MILLION BUCKS, MAYBE I'LL ASK HARUMIN'S MOM NOT TO MOVE.
THIS IS THE LAST BUILDING TO CHECK.
SERIOUSLY?
SNAP.
CRAK
WHAT'S UP, SHUMI?
I...

...JUST SAW A MAN OVER THERE.
IT'S HERE...
SHIMIZU...
...YOU'RE JUST TALKING NONSENSE AGAIN...
GRAB


S-SEKI, DO YOU THINK IT MANIFESTED? THE OWNER'S... YOU KNOW...?

WHAT A LOAD OF CRAP.
YOU GUYS DON'T NEED TO BUY INTO HIS LIES!

BESIDES, THE FACTORY OWNER ...
CRUNCH
PRESIDENT
...WAS A WOMAN.



HEY, KID.
YOU WANNA COME OVER HERE AND HANG OUT WITH US?
NO POINT TALKING TO HIM.
HE THINKS HE'S TOUGH, BUT REALLY HE'S SHY.
HA HA, JUST LIKE HIS DAD.

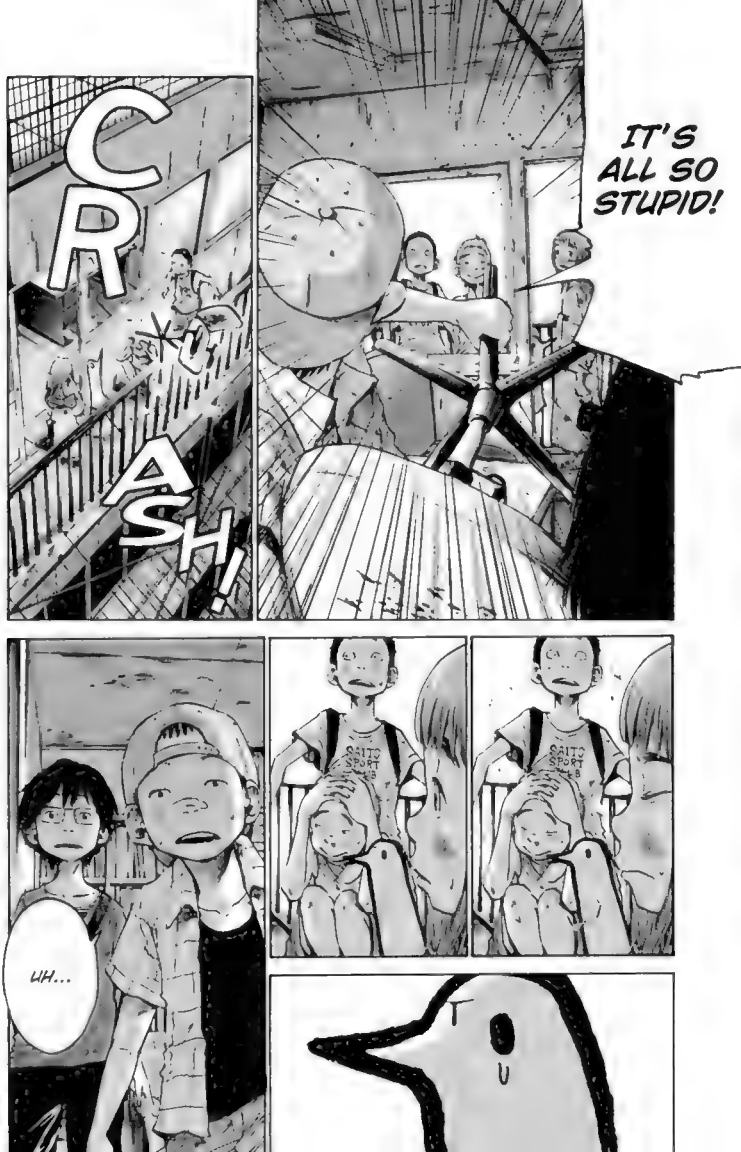
HEEEY, MASUMI!!
WE'RE LEAVING.
THANKS AS ALWAYS, MADAME PRESIDENT!
WHAT'S WITH THAT "MADAME PRESIDENT" NONSENSE, SEKI?
YOU AND I GO BACK A LONG WAY.
TRYING TO SOUND SLICK IN FRONT OF YOUR KID?
I'LL BE BACK TOMOR-ROW.
SEKI BENTO
お弁当の関
SEKI BENTO

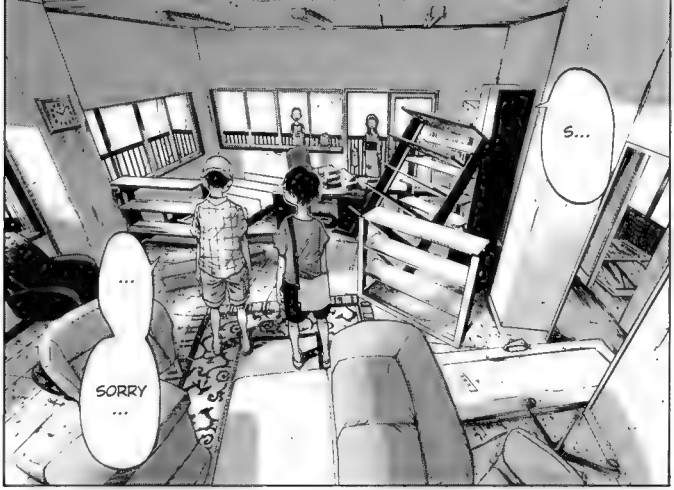
HEY, AUNTY.
HMM?
IF I TAKE OVER FOR MY DAD...
...WILL YOU STILL BUY BENTO FROM ME EVERY DAY?
OF COURSE! I SWEAR TO GOD!
HEH HEH...
PROMISE?!

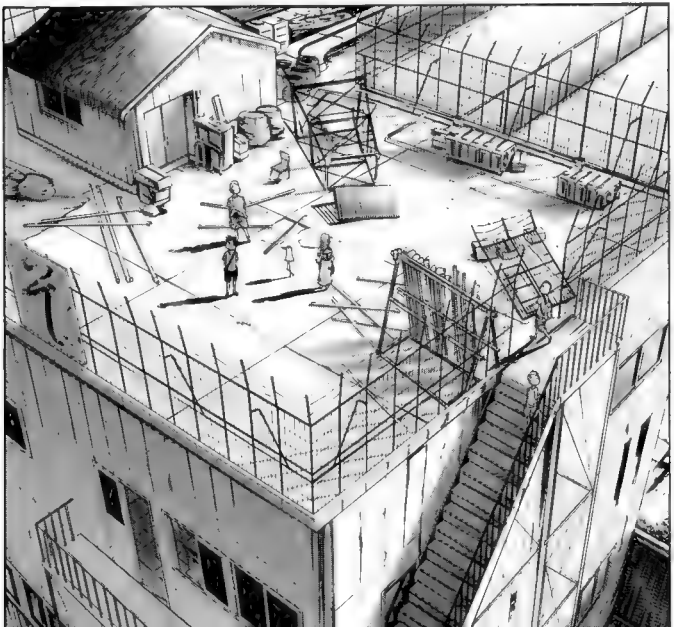
THERE'S NOTHING HERE EITHER...
MMM... MAYBE IT'S TIME TO GIVE UP?

YOU CAN GET ON THE ROOF FROM OUT HERE.
SERIOUSLY ?!
HEY, SEKI... ARE YOU COMING...?

WHOA, WHOA, WHOA!
FWAP
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, SEKI? YOU'LL START A FIRE.
SO WHAT?
LET IT BURN.
NO, NO, NO, THAT'S NOT COOL!
TROMP TROMP
WELL ...
YOU GUYS WOULDN'T UNDER-STAND.
SEKI, WHY ARE YOU BEING SO WEIRD TODAY?!
YOU LAUGH AT EVEN THE STUPIDEST STUFF.


CRASH!
IT'S ALL SO STUPID!
UH...


S...
...
SORRY
...

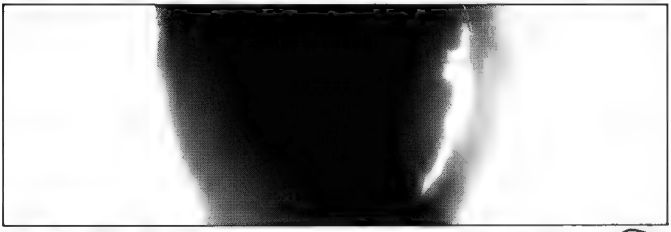


TIME TO GO HOME?
YEAH.

I REALLY WANTED EVERYONE TO HAVE FUN TODAY.

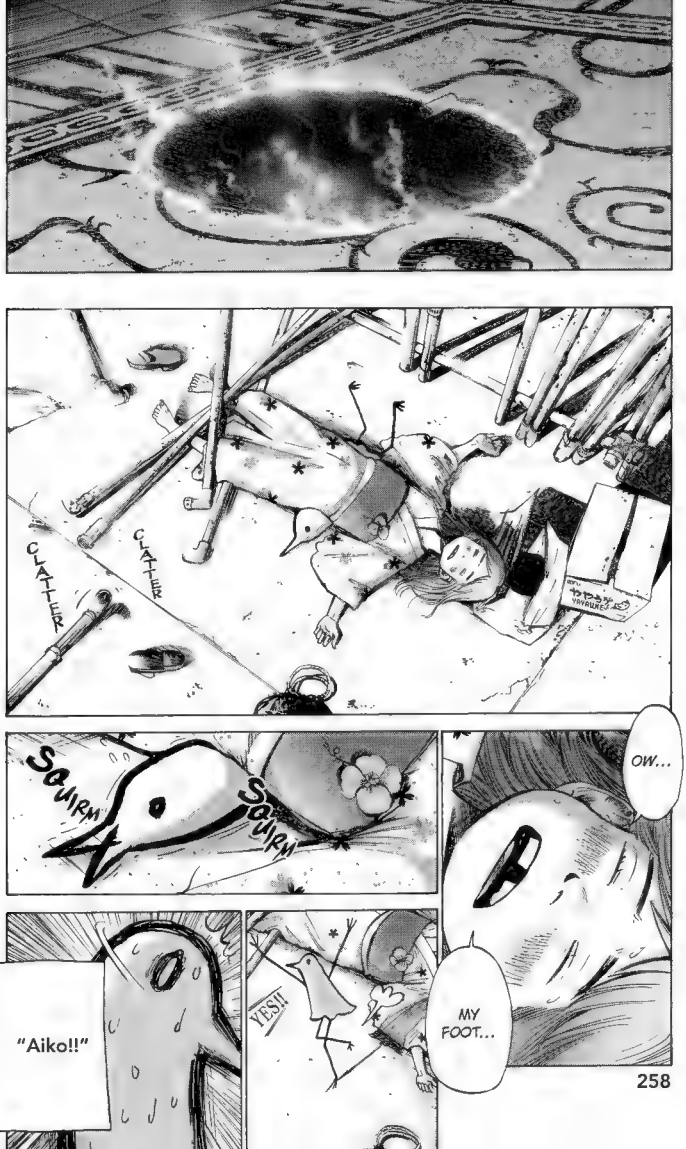
I SAID SORRY...

SHIMI... WHAT IS IT? DO YOU SEE SOMETHING?
WE'VE HAD ENOUGH EXCITEMENT FOR ONE...
... DAY ...
OH...

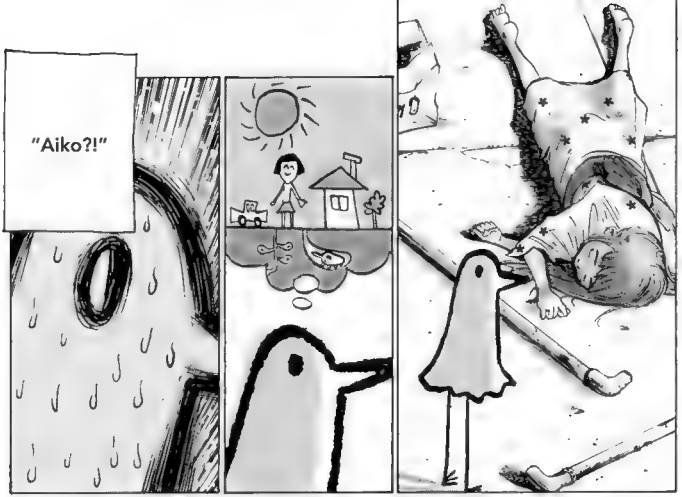


HA...
HA...
HA HA HA HA!

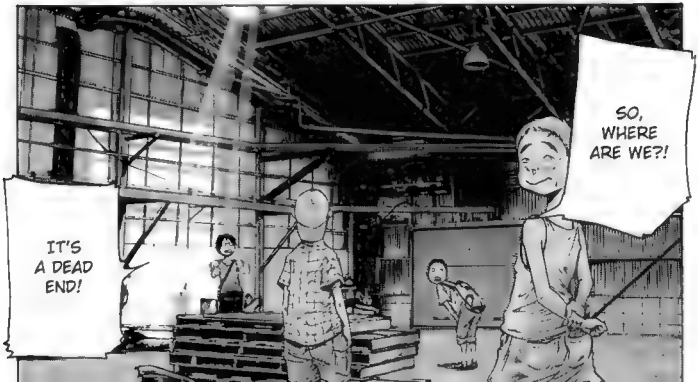
TRIP
DASH
DASH
REALLY, SERIOUSLY?!
OH!
GRAB
SERIOUSLY?!
CRASH
DASH
DASH
DASH
SERI-OUSLY BAD!!
THIS IS BAD!


CLATTER
CLATTER
SQUIRM
SQUIRM
OW...
MY FOOT...
YES!!
"Aiko!!"

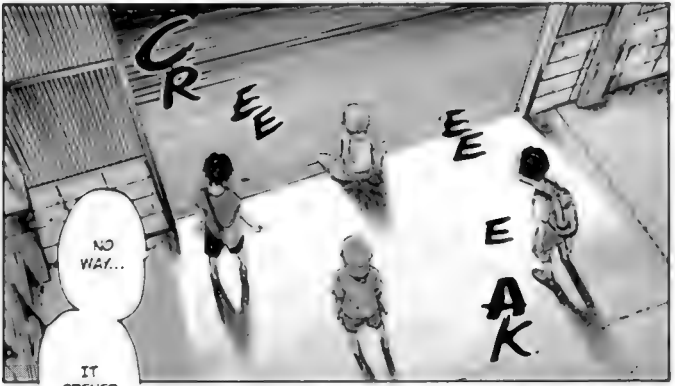
PUNPUN...
THANK...
CRASH
HUFF
HUFF
KA
L
...YOU...
O
NK


"Aiko?!"

NO IDEA, I'M JUST RUNNING!
IS THIS THE WAY WE CAME IN?!
HEY, HARUMIN!

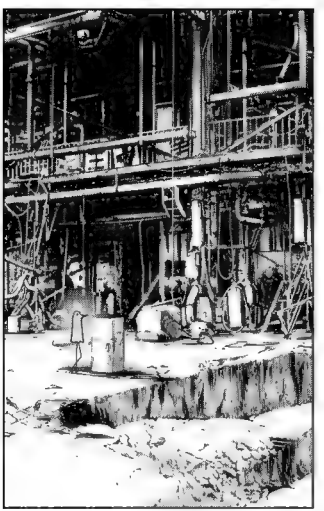

IT'S A DEAD END!
SO, WHERE ARE WE?!

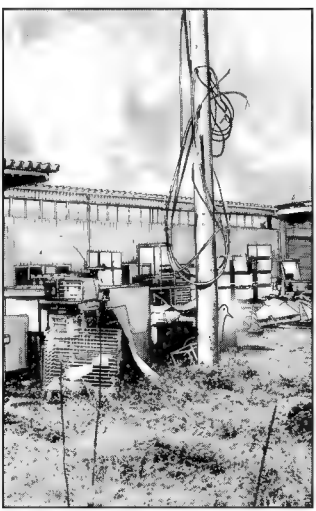
HEY, SHIMI, YOU DON'T ACTUALLY HAVE KAMEHAMEHA RAYS!
NEH
HE
HEH!
SHA
KA
SHAK
W-W-WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? IF WE GO BACK THERE...


CR
EE
EE
E
AK
NO WAY...

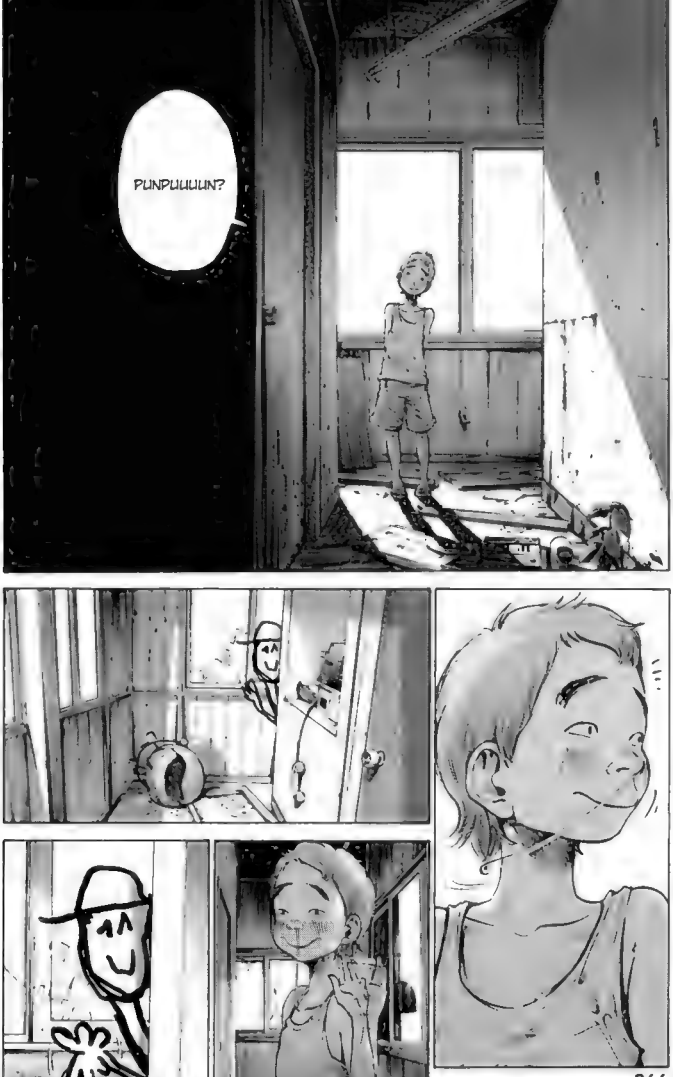
IT OPENED ...?
CR
EAK

COME ON, SHIMI, YOU TOO. HURRY UP!
HURRY, HURRY UP!
PUNPUN AND AIKO AREN'T WITH US...
OH...
I'LL GO LOOK FOR THEM...
SAITO SPORT CLUB
CRASH!

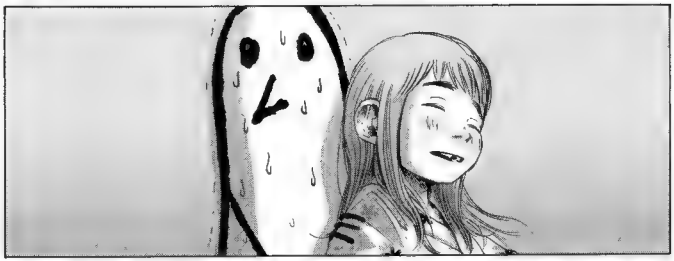




HUFF!
HUFF!
DASH
DA SH
HARU-MIN!
SHOULD WE CALL THE POLICE?!
NO, IT WAS A GHOST! WE'RE DEALING WITH A GHOST!!
DA
SH
NOT GONNA FIND ONE...
I-I GOT IT! A MEDIUM!
WE HAVE TO LOOK FOR A MEDIUM, KOMATSU!
.Chapter 15


PUNPUUUUN?

The man approached so very slowly that Punpun couldn't tell how much time passed.



But he had a feeling that the man was trying to tell him something.

Then Punpun remembered something awful!
"I really need to pee!"

HUFF ...
HUFF ...
IT WON'T OPEN ...
RATTLE
RATTLE
CRAP!
WHAT AM I DOING ...?
I'M USELESS...
I'M TOTALLY WORTH-LESS...

SEKI!
THERE'S A FIRE!

BOOM

THUD
PLINK
PLINK
SHATTER
CLATTER
I'M ASKING, IS THERE A MEDIUM IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD?
HUH?
HARUMIN... DID YOU JUST HEAR A WEIRD NOISE?

CRACKLE
CRACK
CRACK

SOME-
ONE...
HELP...
DEAR
GOD...

Punpun had no clue what was going on.

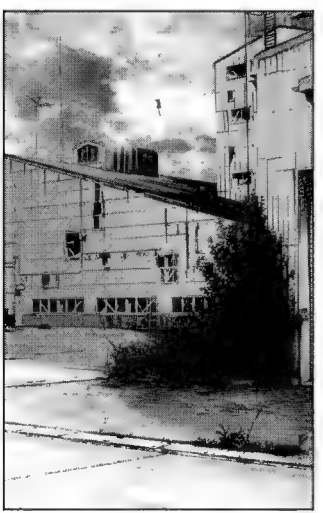
And the thought that he might die there made his mind go completely blank.

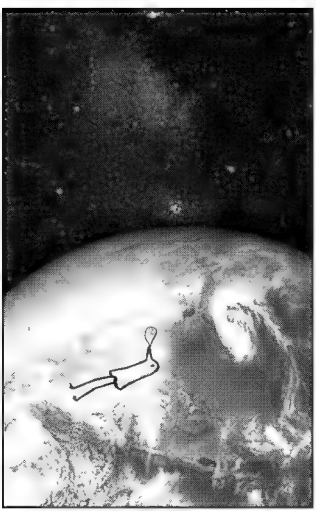
But the man's hoarse whisper...

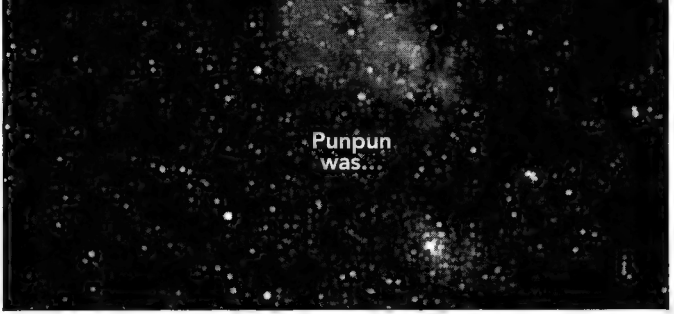
He heard that very clearly.

"Boo"

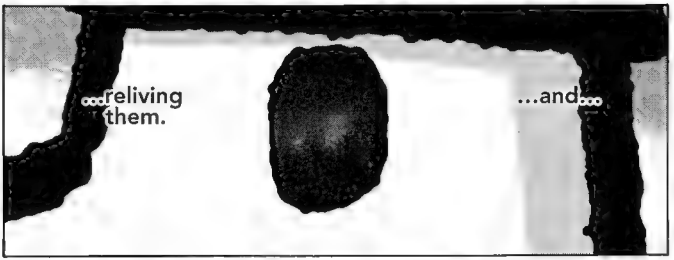
Pupun had reached his limit.

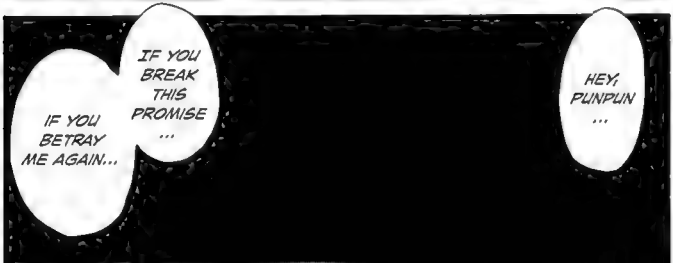





Punpun was...

...the various events that made up his short life...
...very slowly sifting through...


...reliving them.
...and...


IF YOU BETRAY ME AGAIN...
IF YOU BREAK THIS PROMISE ...
HEY, PUNPUN ...

THERE IS NO GOD!
NEXT TIME I'LL KILL YOU.
I LIKE YOU TOO, PUNPUN!
THEN ...
"TEN IN A ROW!"
"THE SWEET SUCKERS WE FOUND IN SHIBUYA."
PUNPUN... I HAVE BAD NEWS...
YOU DON'T LIE, RIGHT PUNPUN?
OKAY, I BELIEVE YOU!
10 IN A ROW!
DON'T UNDER-STAND! I DON'T GET IT!
DON'T GET IT! I DON'T UNDER-STAND!

PUNPUN ...
IT'S TRUE.
SOMEONE REALLY BROKE INTO OUR HOUSE.
THERE WAS A BURGLAR.
YOU BELIEVE ME, DON'T YOU, PUNPUN?!

...IN A FEW YEARS WE'LL RUN OUT OF OIL, THE ENVIRONMENT WILL BE DESTROYED AND EARTH WILL BE UNINHABITABLE?
HEY, DID YOU KNOW...
UNLESS WE ALL MOVE TO ANOTHER PLANET, IT'LL BE OVER FOR HUMANITY.
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
WHAT WAS THAT? SAY THAT AGAIN?

I'M BEING LET GO AT THE END OF THE MONTH.
I'VE BEEN FEELING A LITTLE OVER-WORKED, SO I THINK THIS IS ACTUALLY A GOOD THING.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU THINK IT'S A GOOD THING?!
WHAT ABOUT MONEY?! WE HAVE A MORTGAGE TO PAY!
DON'T WORRY, I'LL FIND ANOTHER JOB SOON.
BUT WE SHOULD USE THIS OPPOR-TUNITY FOR THE THREE OF US TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER!
DON'T SAY THINGS LIKE THAT WHEN YOU REEK OF ALCOHOL!
AAAH! IT WAS A MIS-TAKE!
SOB!
I NEVER SHOULD'VE HAD A KID! I SHOULD HAVE LIVED MY LIFE FOR ME!
W-WHY YOU!
SOB!
THIS MARRIAGE WAS A MISTAKE!
DON'T LET ME HEAR SHIT LIKE THAT COMING OUT OF YOUR MOUTH!

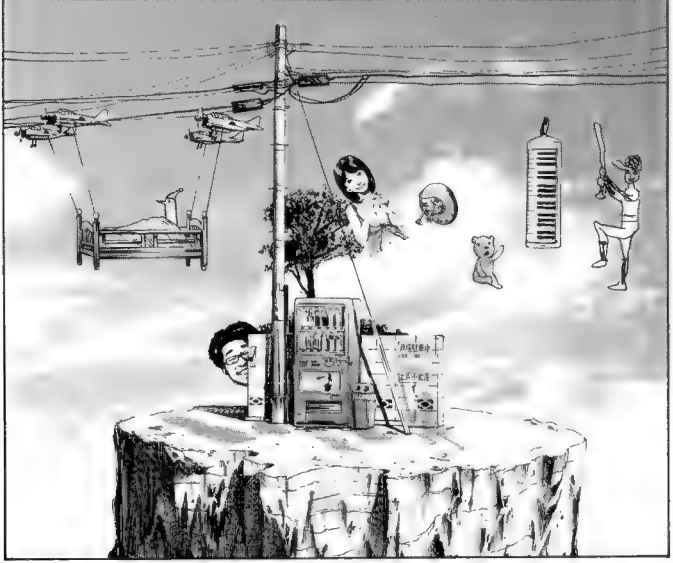
JUST...
...TAKE US TO THE OCEAN.
SQUE
VROOOO
MA'AM!!
...
...WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT SO EARLY IN THE MORNING?
DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE GOING TO KILL THE KID, THEN OFF YOURSELF!
ER, HA HA HA.
JUST KIDDING. THAT'S A JOKE.

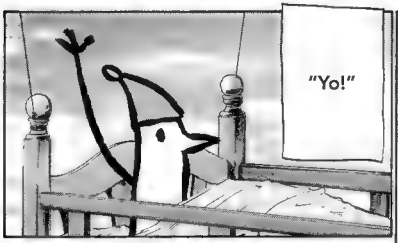
NEVER MIND, JUST TAKE US BACK.
HEY, PUNPUN.
LOOK, IT'S LIKE WE'RE REALLY ONE PERSON.
SORRY, PUNPUN, BUT WE'RE SUPER BEST FRIENDS.
BUT IF YOU DO WHATEVER WE SAY, YOU CAN BE OUR NUMBER-TWO FRIEND.

CHAK
CHAK
CHAK
AH HA HA HA HA!
TOO
TOO
UM...
PUN-PUN?
WE'RE SHORT ONE.
WANNA PLAY?!
PUNPUUUUN!

OH, THANK GOD!
I LOOKED EVERY-WHERE!
YOU KNOW YOU SHOULDN'T COME THIS FAR BY YOURSELF!
YOUR MOM AND DAD ARE DESPERATELY LOOKING FOR YOU RIGHT NOW!
Yamashita Mart
OH, THANK YOU, SORRY FOR THE TROUBLE.
I'M HIS UNCLE...
OH, ALL THIS WAY CHASING A SHOOTING STAR...
YEAH, SORRY- HE'S LIKE THAT.
YES, YES. I KNOW YOU WERE LONELY AND WORRIED ALL BY YOURSELF.
HE WON'T STOP CRYING, GEEZ.

HEY, I KNOW!
HOW ABOUT I LET YOU IN ON SOME-THING!
DID YOU KNOW...
...THAT GOD IS ALWAYS NEARBY FOR GOOD KIDS LIKE YOU, PUNPUN?
IF YOU GET LONELY, YOU JUST CHANT THIS SPELL.
"DEAR GOD, DEAR GOD..
"... TINKLE HOY."





Looking unusually serious, God spoke to Punpun.

If, no matter how much people need each other and hurt each other, there's still no such thing as perfect understanding, then what on earth can you believe in? Just kidding—lighten up!

Punpun, here's what God thinks.

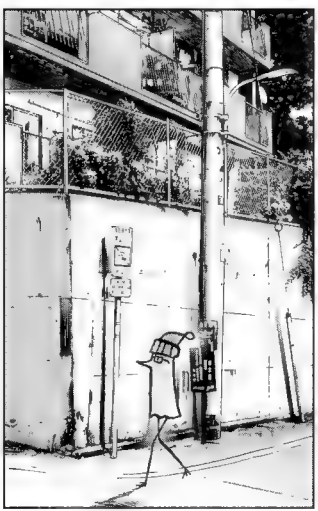
Humans, as long as they live, have an emptiness inside them that can never be filled.

Well, Punpun ...

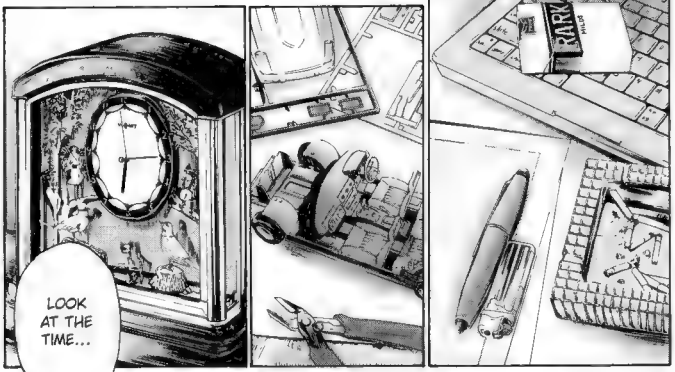
...let's stay friends.

WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND, HONEY?
MMMM... WE'VE GONE THROUGH A LOT TO GET WHERE WE ARE NOW.
THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE STUPID, MOMENTS THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN PRECIOUS BUT THAT WE FORGOT.. JUST A LOT OF THINGS...
BUT REALLY ...
...I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD OWN MY OWN HOME.
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? IT'S BECAUSE YOU WORKED HARD FOR IT, HONEY.
A $50,000 DOWN PAYMENT AND BY THE TIME WE FINISH REPAYING THE 25-YEAR MORTGAGE, THIS ONE HERE WILL BE AN ADULT.
I'M GOING TO WORK HARD TO PAY IT OFF EARLY!
YOU'RE SO MANLY TODAY, HON.

IN MY TWENTIES, I THOUGHT BUYING A HOME WAS THE FINAL GOAL...
...BUT NOW I SEE IT'S JUST A CHECK-POINT.
LET'S BUILD A HAPPY HOME HERE, THE THREE OF US, OKAY?
OKAY.



Chapter 17


LOOK AT THE TIME...

PUNPUN'S LATE.

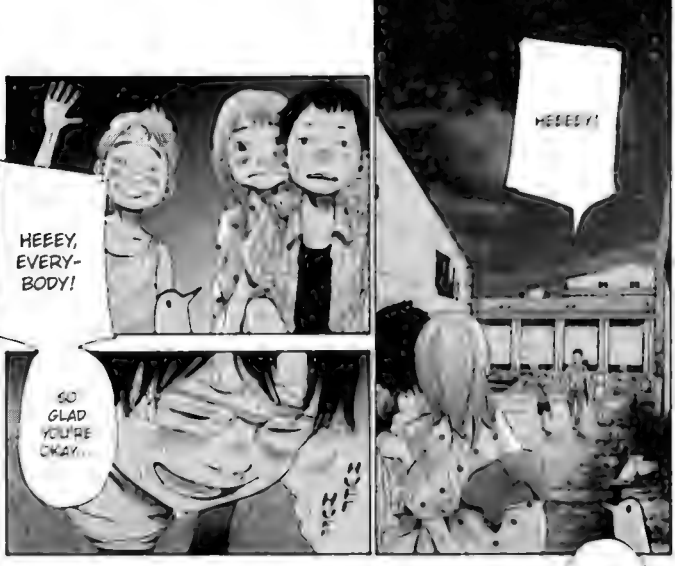
A SUMMER SHOWER
PEOPLE RUNNING IN THE FIELD
FEW AND FAR BETWEEN
-MASAOKA SHIKI
ZSSSSH
OH... WHEN DID IT START RAINING ...?

WHAT-EVER!
THE LAUNDRY'S STILL OUTSIDE!
OH
HO
HO
HO
WIIAP WIIAP
I'M TAKING A NAP!
I'M NAPPING!
ZSSSSH

SSSSSH

..PUN.
PUNPUN?
PUNPUN!
OH, THEY'RE GOOD-LOOKING
HE'S AWAKE

PUNPUN, CAN YOU GET UP?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WOULD DO IF YOU HADN'T WOKEN UP...
I'M SO GLAD.
SO GLAD...


HEEEY!
HEEEY, EVERY-BODY!
SO GLAD YOU'RE OKAY...
HUFF HUFF

LET ME INTRODUCE YOU!
THIS IS MR. KIYOMOTO ...

...A MEDIUM WHO JUST HAP-PENED TO BE PASSING BY!

THERE IS AN EVIL SPIRIT LIVING HERE!

UHH ...
OKAY, LET'S GO HOME THEN...
SEKI...
I'M OKAY. I CAN WALK NOW.

CHISSY ...
HEY, TAKE IT EASY.
A LOT ...
...HAPPENED TODAY.
IF IT HADN'T STARTED RAINING, IT MIGHT'VE BEEN REALLY BAD...
JUST LIKE THE POOP GOD SAID, I TRIED TO DO THE RIGHT THING...
...AND IT STARTED POURING!
SHIMIZU

OKAY
THANKS

The thought almost made him cry.

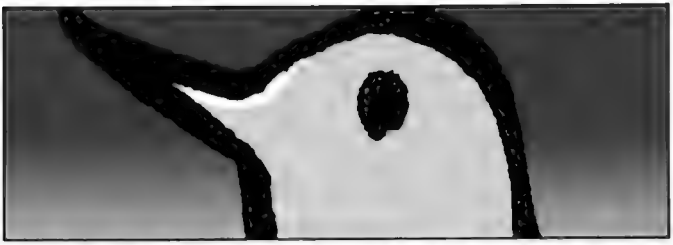
In spite of everything, he wouldn't be able to deliver on his promise to Aiko.

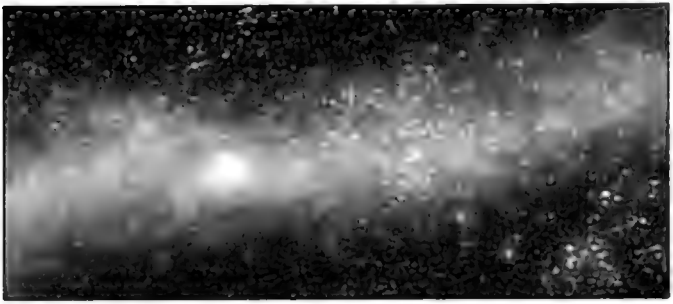
Even Punpun could understand the situation.

...so Punpun held tight to it.

...and small in his...

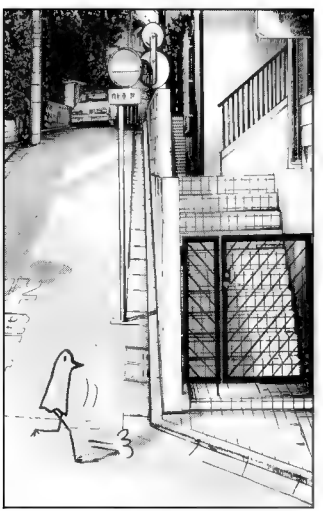
But Aiko's hand was soft and warm...

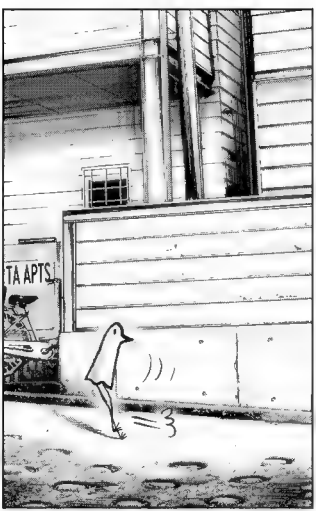




For some reason, that thought settled in Punpun's mind.

"The sky is so full of stars it's about to overflow. I hope I get to see it again someday."




TA APTS

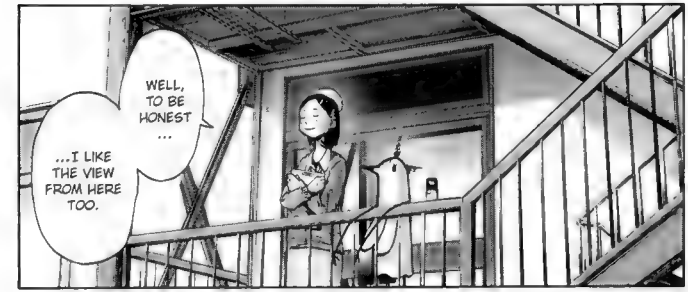
A MAN TURNED HIMSELF IN TO THE POLICE IN THE EARLY HOURS OF THE MORNING, CLAIMING HE HAD MURDERED HIS ENTIRE FAMILY.
BASED ON HIS STATEMENT, THE BODIES OF A MAN AND TWO WOMEN WERE FOUND IN AN ABANDONED MISO FACTORY. THEY ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN DEAD FOR SEVERAL MONTHS.

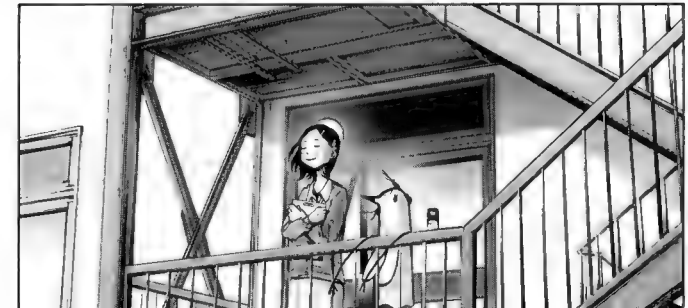
OH!
I KNOW THAT FACTORY! YOU GO DOWN K HIGHWAY...
OH... THAT BIG FACTORY? WHEN DID IT GO OUT OF BUSINESS?
HEY, CAN YOU FIX THE PICTURE ON THE TELEVISION?

THE SUSPECT FURTHER TESTIFIED, "WE ARGUED ABOUT WORK AND I LOST CONTROL AND KILLED THEM."
THE FACTORY ALSO SHOWS SIGNS OF A FIRE, AND AUTHORITIES ARE INVESTIGATING WHETHER IT IS CONNECTED TO THIS CASE.

Chapter 18

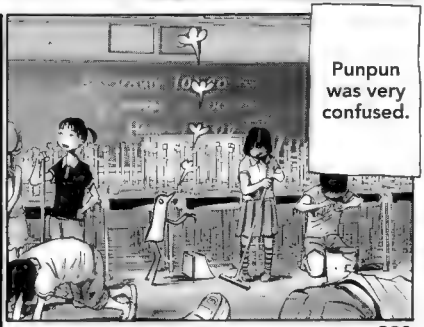
MRS. PUN-YAMA!
YOU CAN'T COME OUT HERE BY YOURSELF!
AND THERE'S ABSOLUTELY NO SMOKING OUTSIDE DESIGNATED SMOKING AREAS!
I'M NOT BOTHERING ANYONE.
KSSH!


WELL, TO BE HONEST ...
...I LIKE THE VIEW FROM HERE TOO.

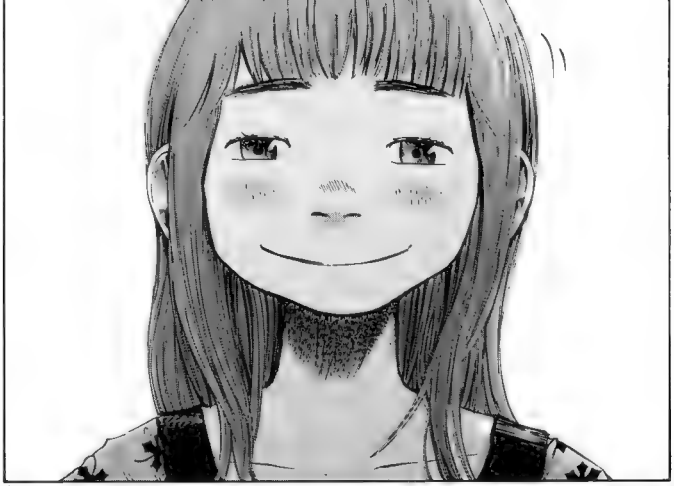


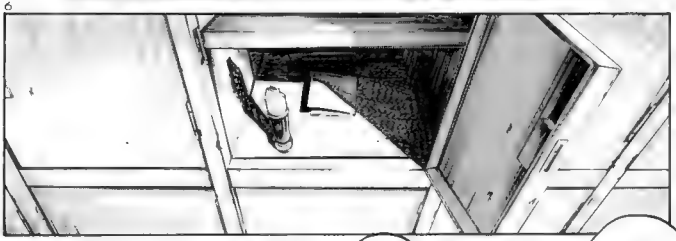
YOU'RE BEING DISCHARGED TOMORROW.
YOUR SON MUST BE HAPPY.
WHO KNOWS?
I DON'T LIKE KIDS AND I DON'T WANT TO GO HOME.
YOU KNOW, I DON'T BELONG ANYWHERE ANYMORE!
OH NO... DON'T TALK LIKE THAT...
YOU'RE SUCH A SWEET, SERIOUS THING...
IF I WERE A GUY YOUR AGE, I'D EAT YOU UP.
HOW GREAT TO BE YOUNG!
ARE YOU HAVING SEX?!
UM, NO... I DON'T HAVE A BOYFRIEND...

But he knew that no matter how confused he was, it wouldn't solve anything, and he was even a little angry that he couldn't be anything but confused.



"...Aiko will kill me!"
"If I don't do something...
BANG BANG BANG!





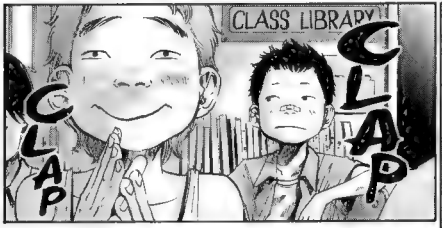
UMMM... I KNOW YOU'VE ALL BEEN WAITING FOR SUMMER VACATION, AND IT STARTS TOMORROW!
I'll be waiting at Town Hall at 6pm
Aiko
IT'S FINE TO ENJOY YOUR SUMMER TO THE FULLEST AND SPEND TIME PLAYING ...
BUT DON'T FORGET...
...ANYONE WHO NEGLECTS THEIR HOME-WORK WILL FACE CERTAIN DEATH!

AND I HAVE ONE MORE IMPORTANT THING TO TELL YOU.
CLAP
HARUMI! TO THE FRONT!
KLATTA
Y-YES, SIR!

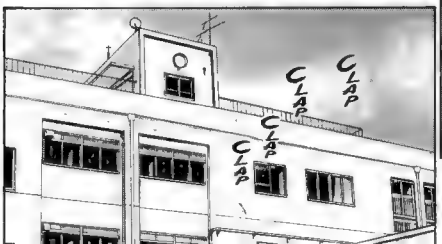
THIS IS HAPPENING EARLIER THAN EXPECTED, BUT HARUMI'S PARENTS HAVE DECIDED...
...THAT HE'LL TRANSFER SCHOOLS NOW, RATHER THAN AT THE START OF NEXT TERM.

UHH... HARUMI, SAY A FEW WORDS TO THE CLASS.

CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING!
CLAP
CLAP


CLASS LIBRARY
CLAP
CLAP

CLAP
CLAP
CLAP

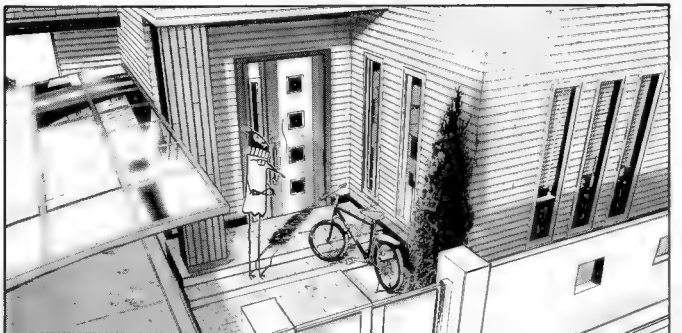

CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP

THAT'S RIGHT! I'M GOING TO POUND IT!
GO ALL OUT!!
THAT'S SO COOL... SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO HIDE TO DO PWC ANYMORE, HARUMIN...
SHWA
WE'RE MOVING TO A HOUSE THAT'S THREE STORIES TALL AND HAS A GARAGE AND UNDERFLOOR STORAGE AND ITS SUPER HUGE!
BUT OF COURSE, PWC WILL NEVER DIE...
AND I FINALLY GET MY OWN ROOM.
SHWA
SHWA
SHWA
SHWA
SO WHEN MY DAD TOLD ME WE WERE GOING TO BUILD A HOUSE, I WAS SUPER PSYCHED...
I HATED SHARING A ROOM WITH MY SISTER IN THE APARTMENT...
BUT, WELL ...
OH, SORRY! WAIT HERE A SEC!
I'M NOT THAT EXCITED ANYMORE...
BUT I DON'T KNOW ...

VROOM VROOM VROOOOM!
VROOM VROOM VROOOOM!
AND BESIDES, PUNPUN, YOU WERE SO JEALOUS OF MY SIX-SPEED, SO...
WELL, YOU KNOW IT'S GOOD TO GET RID OF THINGS WHEN YOU MOVE, RIGHT?
HEH HEH HEH.
WHAT DO YOU SAY AT A TIME LIKE THIS...?
AND, KOMATSU, YOU WERE SAYING YOU WANTED A PLAY-STATION. I CAN'T DO THAT, BUT HERE...
I'M NOT REALLY SURE...

LET'S HANG OUT TOGETHER AGAIN.
I'LL MAKE SURE...
...TO FIND A REAL PORNO FOR NEXT TIME.

LATER!

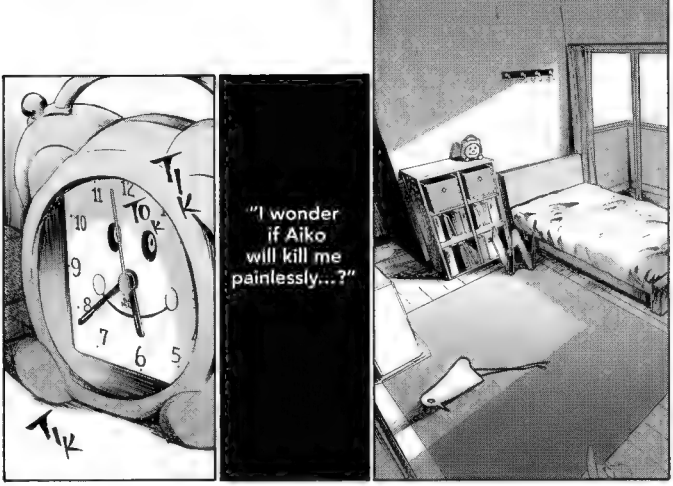


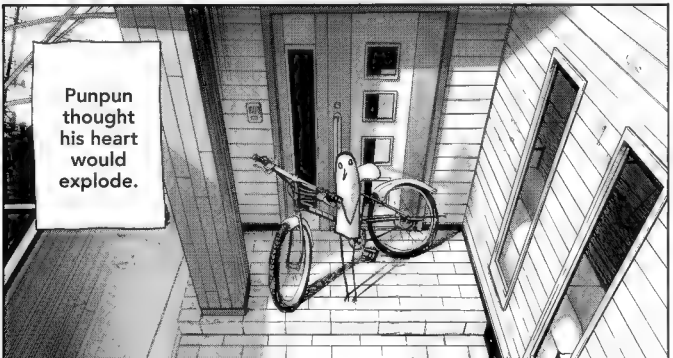
For some reason, Punpun felt very lonely.
And to be honest ...
...a part of him didn't care about his promise to Aiko.
"Kagoshima is far away, and there's no way we can get there. We're just kids.
"And really, why do I have to get killed just for breaking a promise?
"Maybe Aiko's an idiot..."

Punpun could only laugh.
HOHOHO
OH

HA-HA HA HA HA
It was hysterical.

"...NEXT TIME, I'LL KILL YOU."
"IF YOU BETRAY ME AGAIN..."

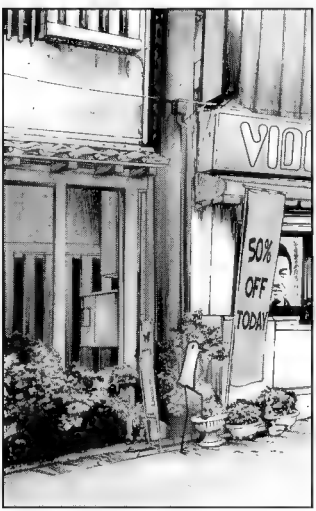

TIK
TOK
TIK
"I wonder if Aiko will kill me painlessly...?"


Punpun thought his heart would explode.

"On a six-speed,
we might make
it to Kagoshima..."

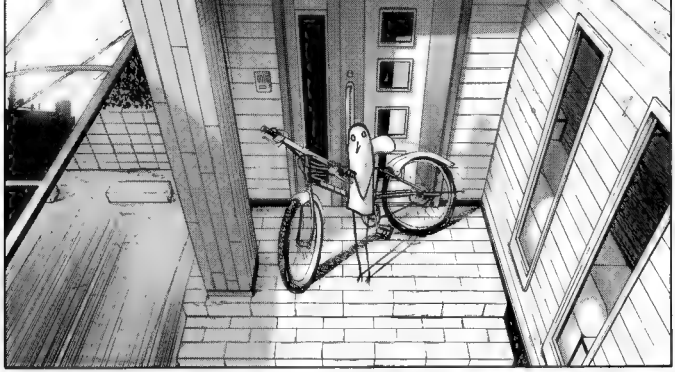
EXCUSE ME, HAVE YOU SEEN MRS. PUNYAMA?
IS SHE SMOKING AGAIN...?
A HANDFUL TO THE VERY END...
KKO

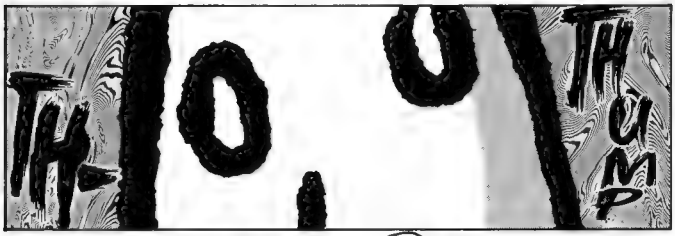
HELL


50% OFF TODAY

CLICK
BRRNG
BRRNG
HELLO
ONODERA... I MEAN, PUNYAMA RESIDENCE.
OH HI, THANKS FOR TAKING CARE OF MY SISTER...

Chapter 19




TH-
O,
THUMP

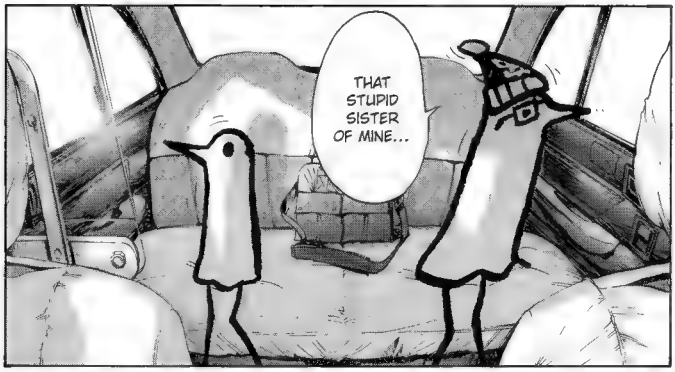
PUNPUN ?!
OH! THERE YOU ARE!
WAIT A MINUTE, I TOLD YOU TO TELL ME WHENEVER YOU GO OUT TO PLAY...
HEEEY, PUNPUN!
OH, NEVER MIND THAT, PUNPUN!

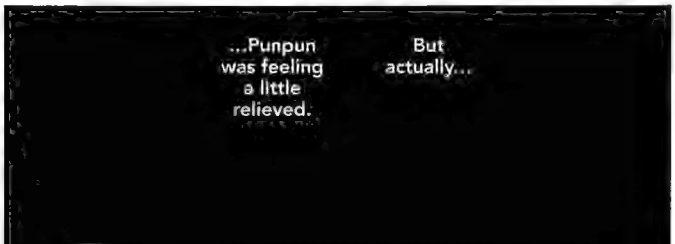
YOUR MOM!

SHE FELL OFF A FIRE ESCAPE AT THE HOSPITAL!!

DRIVER, WE'RE IN A RUSH, SO STEP ON THE GAS!

Punpun had pretty much been forced into the taxi.
FINE. JUST STEP ON IT, PLEASE.
OHHH... WELL, THIS ROAD BACKS UP THIS TIME OF DAY, SO I'LL GO AROUND BY TOWN HALL.


THAT STUPID SISTER OF MINE...


But actually...
...Punpun was feeling a little relieved.

YOU KNOW, MY SISTER, SHE'S ALWAYS BEEN DIFFICULT ...
EMOTION-ALLY UNSTABLE OR WHAT-EVER...
...BUT TO BE BLUNT, SHE'S JUST WEIRD.
Punpun...
...was really scared of going to Kagoshima...
...just Aiko and him.
YEAH... YEAH...
I THINK SHE WANDERED AROUND ABROAD IN HER LATE TEENS.
PRETTY MUCH RAN AWAY FROM HOME, DROPPED OUT OF COLLEGE.
VRRR
THE WAY SHE TELLS IT, IT WAS A TRIP TO FIND FREEDOM AND HAPPINESS ...
...BUT TO ME, IT SEEMED LIKE SHE WAS JUST RUNNING AWAY.
PM 06:05

VROOM
I THINK YOU CAN ONLY GAIN TRUE FREEDOM...
...WHEN YOU'RE WILLING TO THROW AWAY EVERYTHING!
BECAUSE AFTER ALL THAT, SHE JUST CAME HOME!
THAT WAS THE LEVEL OF HER COMMITMENT!

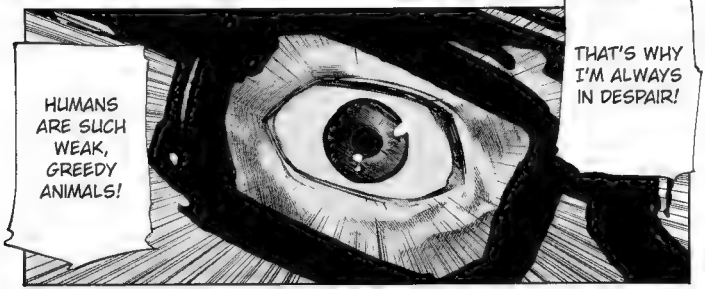
...really, really scared. Aiko was also probably... Probably...

VROOM
ALAS!
PEOPLE ARE LOST, DESTINED TO CHASE A TRUTH THAT DOESN'T EXIST!
BECAUSE "HAPPINESS" DESCRIBES MOMENTS, AND IT'S NEVER PERMANENT!
BUT I DON'T THINK THERE'S REAL HAPPINESS IN THAT FREEDOM!
..."if Aiko gets scared and doesn't come to the meeting spot..."
"How great would it be," Punpun thought...

Punpun started to believe that was what was really happening.

If that was true, how selfish could she be?!

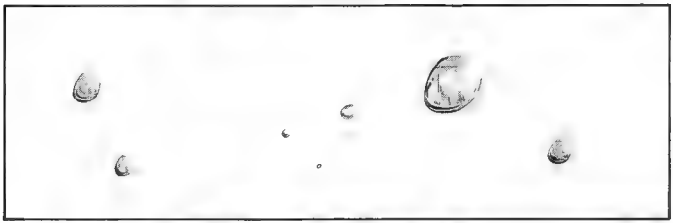
Maybe Aiko was home right now, shivering and eating choco pies.

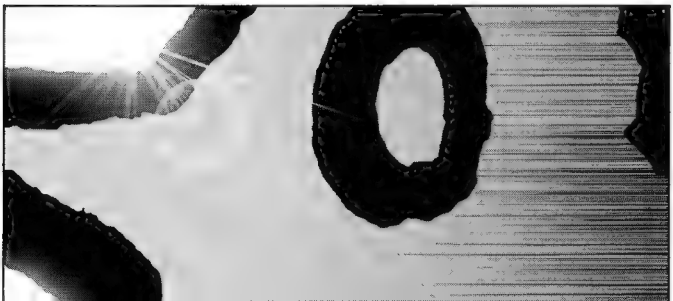


The thought of saying that to her the next time they met lifted Punpun's spirits.

"Weeell, you're just a coward, Aiko... *Nyah nyah!*"

Town Hall
VROOM



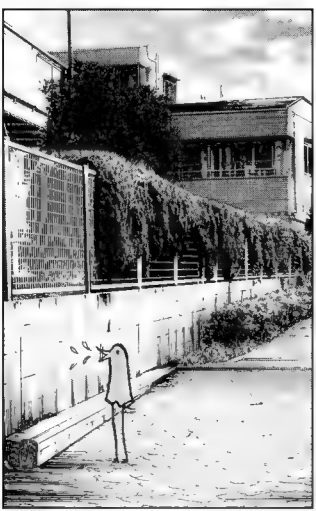


PANT ...
PANT ...
SORRY... I GOT A LITTLE CARRIED AWAY.
I WAS JUST TALKING TO MYSELF, SO DON'T PAY IT ANY ATTENTION, PUNPUN...
13
VROOOM
PUNPUN?
CLAK CLAK CLAK
THIS WAY, PLEASE, MR. PUNYAMA.
CLAK CLAK

SPITAL
FIRST OF ALL, LET ME JUST SAY...
...WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH YOU?
WHAT? IT'S NOT LIKE I JUMPED.
MY HAND JUST SLIPPED.
OH, REALLY! YOUR HAND SLIPPED AND YOU FELL FROM A THIRD-FLOOR BALCONY? HOW VERY SKILLED OF YOU!
WELL THEN, LET'S SAY MY FOOT SLIPPED.
WAP
WAP
SIGH...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "LET'S SAY"?
WHATEVER, NEVER MIND. YOU'RE STILL GETTING DISCHARGED TOMORROW, AND YOU'LL GET OUTPATIENT TREATMENT FOR YOUR FRACTURE.
I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU AND PUNPUN BEING ALONE, SO I'LL HANG AROUND AWHILE LONGER...

OH! THAT WOULD BE SO HELPFUL!
AS YOU CAN SEE, MY RIGHT HAND IS USELESS, SO WILL YOU DO ALL THE CHORES?!
THE ROOF OF THE BIKE SHED CUSHIONED YOUR FALL AND YOU MIRACULOUSLY SURVIVED WITH JUST A FEW MINOR INJURIES...
WHAT A POINTLESS MIRACLE!
THAT'S A HARSH THING TO SAY.
SWEETIE, WHAT'S WRONG?

Punpun thought...
"It would be okay if the earth exploded right now."



Chapter 20

I SAID, I'M HOME!
OH, THERE YOU ARE.
SAY SOME-THING!
WHACK

W-WHAT IS IT...?
WHA- WHY ARE YOU MAKING THAT FACE!
S-STOP IT!
WHAT ?!
WHAT IS WITH THAT KID?!
YEAH. HE'S BEEN LIKE THAT SINCE YESTERDAY.
Punpun was in so much agony.

He didn't think he'd make it.

Do you feel better now that you've taken it out on her?

God loves the despicable Mr. Punyama!

It felt bad.
Not at all.

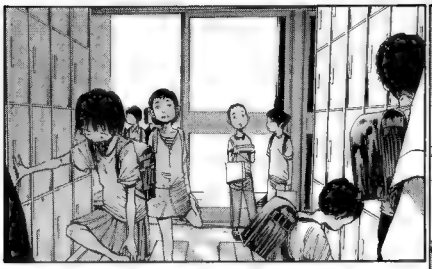
IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO DONATE, PLEASE CONTACT US...
AH HA HA
AH HA HA HA
Did Aiko get home okay...
...or did she go to Kagoshima by herself?
Maybe she's still crying.
He thought he would go crazy.
...was agonizing for Punpun.
Thinking about what Aiko might be thinking...

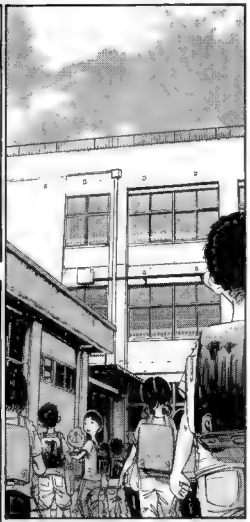
Punpun was so despicable ...
...he thought he'd be better off dead.

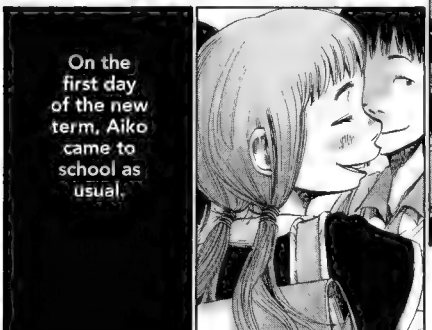
MIN
MIN
MIN
MIN
YUP
HOW TO FILE FOR DIVORCE
YUP
YUP
UMM... SO ON THE CONDITION THAT SHE PAYS OFF THE MORTGAGE, THE DEED TO THE HOUSE GOES TO MY SISTER...
HEY, IS IT OKAY IF I WATCH TV?

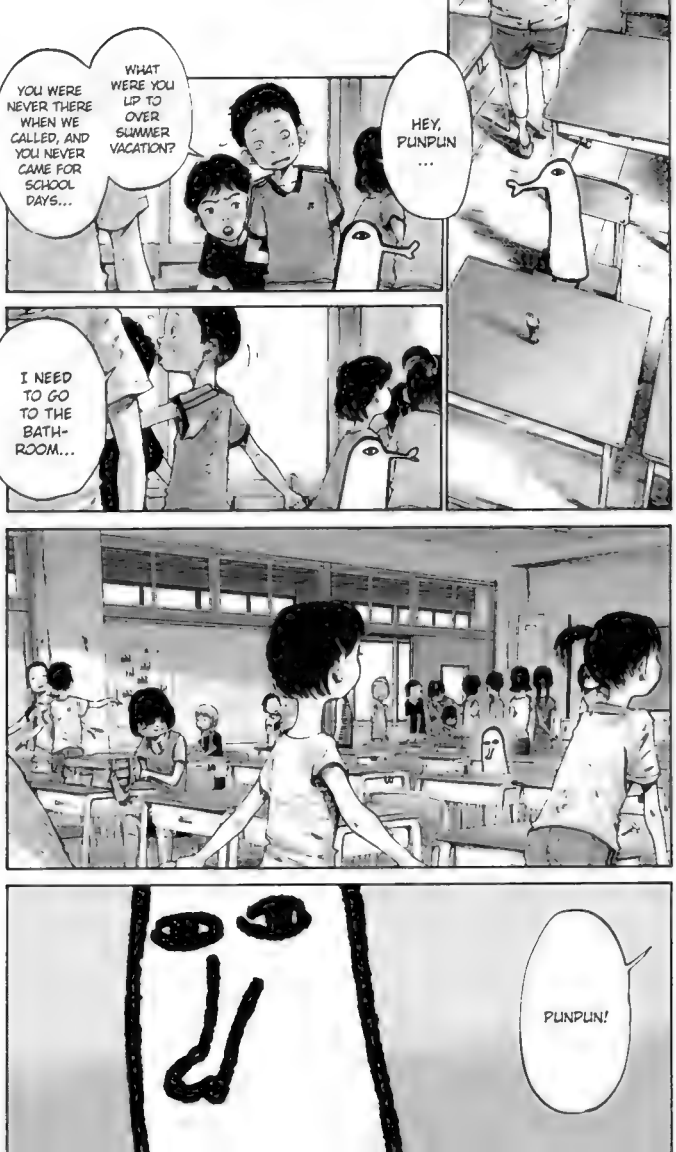
HEEEY, PUNPUN.
KOMATSU IS ON THE PHONE...
PUNPUN'S BEEN IN A MOOD LATELY...
I WONDER IF HE'S OKAY. SCHOOL STARTS TOMORROW, RIGHT?
I'M SURE HE'S FINE. HE'S EATING.
SO, I'M THINKING OF LOOKING FOR WORK.
OH, I'M SO PROUD OF YOU! YOU WANT TO HELP WITH THE RENT?
NO... ACTU-ALLY...
...WATCHING YOU GUYS MAKES ME WANT TO GET MY SHIT TOGETHER...

Summer vacation just flew by.

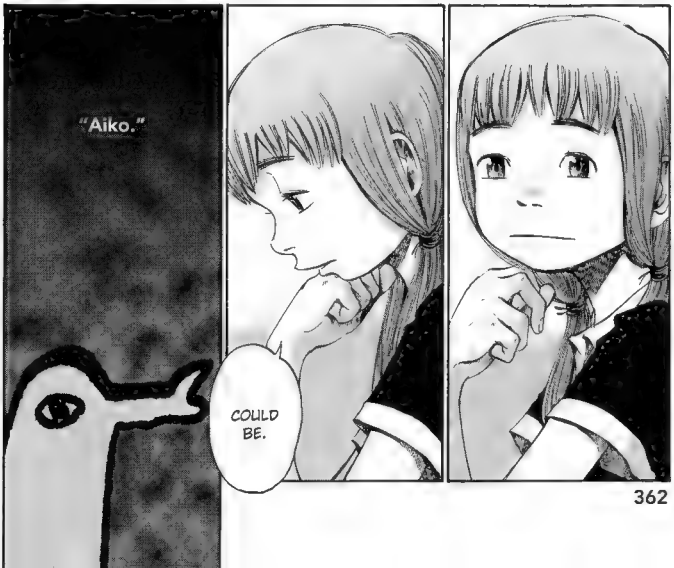





On the first day of the new term, Aiko came to school as usual.


HEY, PUNPUN ...
WHAT WERE YOU UP TO OVER SUMMER VACATION?
YOU WERE NEVER THERE WHEN WE CALLED, AND YOU NEVER CAME FOR SCHOOL DAYS...
I NEED TO GO TO THE BATH-ROOM...
PUNPUN!

IT WOULD BE SUPER COOL TO HAVE SOMEONE FAMOUS IN OUR CLASS.
JUNIOR IDOL AUDITION
GRAB HOLD OF YOUR DREAMS WITH US
HEY, PUNPUN... YOU LOOK LIKE YOU SHOULD BE IN A BOY BAND.
HEY, AIKO! DON'T YOU THINK PUNPUN COULD BE IN A BOY BAND?!
WHY DON'T YOU APPLY FOR THIS?

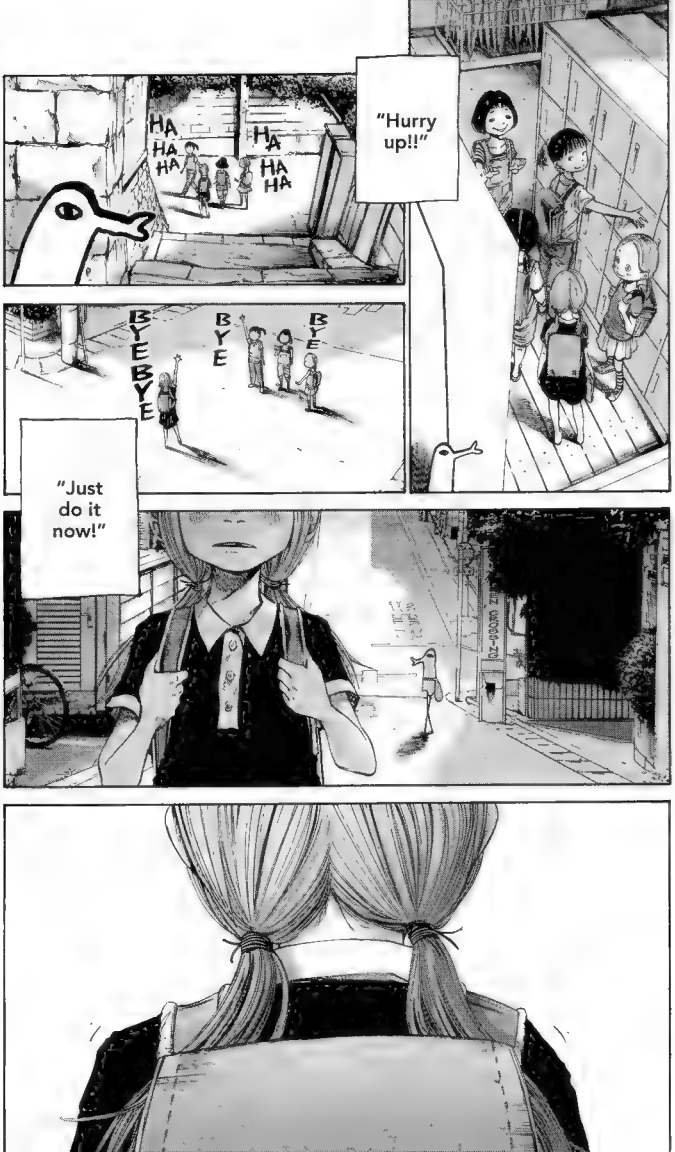

"Aiko."
COULD BE.

HEY, HEY, HEY!
CLAP
CLAP
EVERYONE IN YOUR SEATS!
UMMMM, I KNOW WE'VE JUST STARTED THE NEW TERM...
...BUT I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE A NEW FRIEND!
Today's Helper: Seki
I'M FROM SUGINAMI WARD.
MY NAME IS
"Aiko!

"Just kill me!!"

If Aiko wanted him dead...
...then Punpun strongly felt that she should just get it over with.

SINCE WE HAVE A NEW STUDENT ...
WHAT?!
PSYCH!
NYA NYA
WAH HA HA
...LET'S MAKE THE FIRST LESSON A TEST!
"Okay..."
BONG
BING
BING
BONG


"Hurry up!!"
HA HA HA
HA HA HA
BYE BYE
BYE
BYE
"Just do it now!"

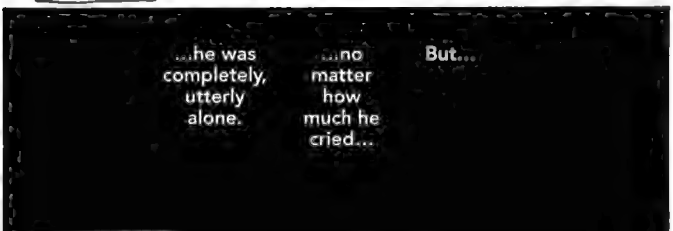
WHY ARE YOU FOLLOW-ING ME?
IWAIA APTS.

IF YOU WANT SOME-THING ...
...WHY DON'T YOU JUST COME OUT AND SAY IT?

"I don't want to die...
"I'm sorry..."

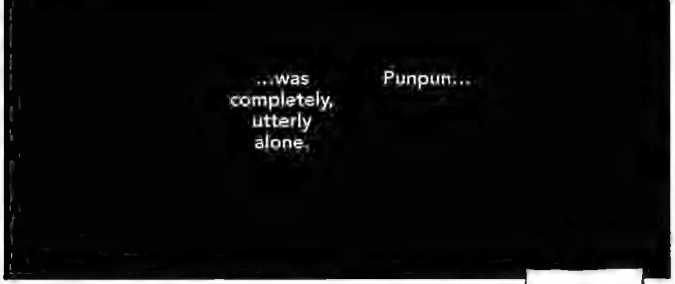
...
AND?

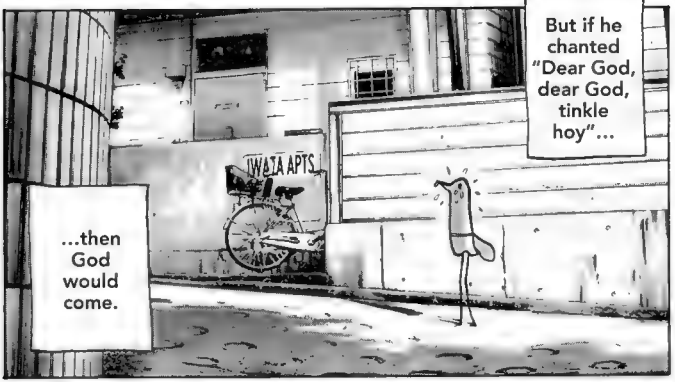
Punpun still...
...really loved Aiko.


...he was completely, utterly alone.
...no matter how much he cried...
But...

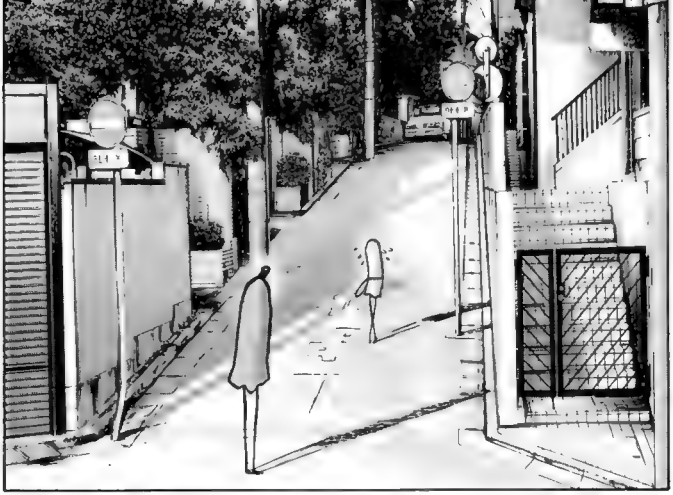
FAMILY
30

EIÉVL

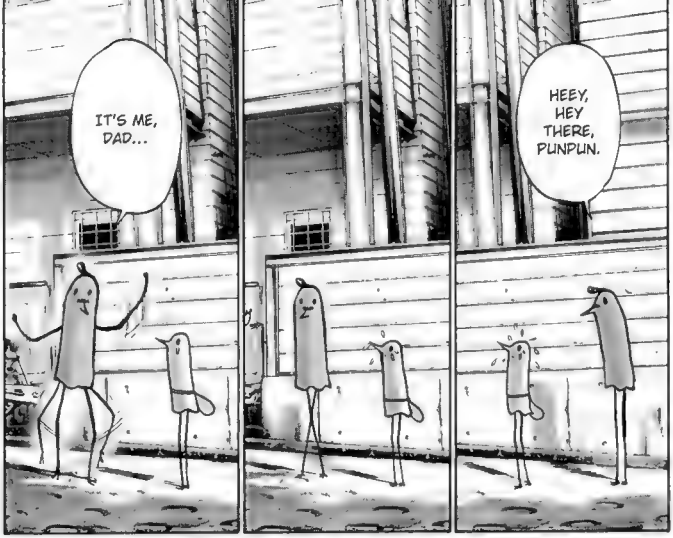

...was completely, utterly alone.
Punpun...


But if he chanted "Dear God, dear God, tinkle hoy"...
IWATA APTS
...then God would come.

What a piece of shit.
PYU
IWATA APTS
IWATA APTS



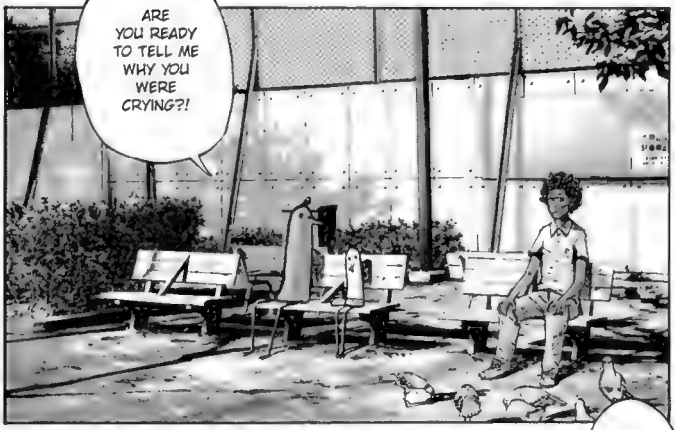
HEEEY, PUNPUN.

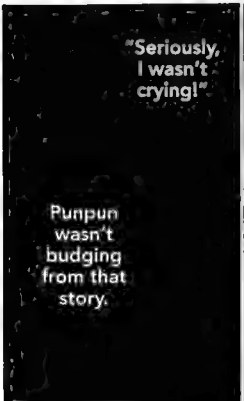

IT'S ME, DAD...
HEEY, HEY THERE, PUNPUN.

"It's Dad!"

It was Dad!!

AWWW RIGHT, PUNPUN!


ARE YOU READY TO TELL ME WHY YOU WERE CRYING?!


"Seriously, I wasn't crying!"
Punpun wasn't budging from that story.

DID YOUR FRIENDS PICK ON YOU?

YEAH, SHE'S PRETTY CUTE.
OHHH... THAT GIRL BACK THERE...?
DID YOU GET DUMPED BY YOUR SWEET-HEART?!
OHHH...
...I GET IT!
BUT SHE DOESN'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE.
Iwama Rugby
Let's go, let's go!

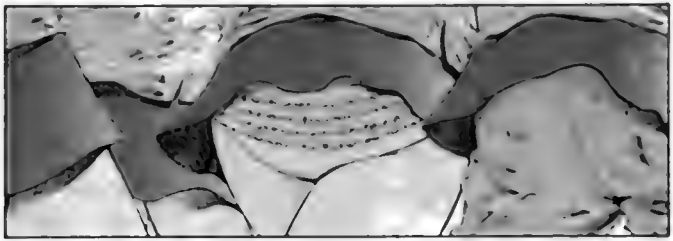
LET'S GO!
LET'S GO!
LET'S GO!
LET'S GO!
I SEE...
IT'S ONLY BEEN TWO MONTHS SINCE I LAST SAW YOU, PUNPUN...
...BUT YOU SEEM A LOT MORE MATURE.

WELL, GIRLS ARE ALWAYS LIKE THAT.
I'M SURE THEY'RE FROM SOMEWHERE FAR, FAR AWAY AT THE END OF THE UNIVERSE.

SPEAKING OF, ARE YOU USING THE TELESCOPE?
GO, LET'S GO! LET'S GO!
NOD
NOD
It was at the bottom of his closet.
EVERY TIME I LOOK AT THE STARS, I THINK...
..."EVEN IF THERE'S A FATED SOMEONE OUT THERE IN THOSE MILLIONS OF STARS, IS IT POSSIBLE TO EVER MEET...?"

BUT THAT FEELING OF WANTING TO TREASURE HER...
I WANT YOU TO BELIEVE THAT WAS REAL.
IWAMA TENNIS
FIGHT ON, FIGHT ON!
ALL WE WANT IS TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER, BUT WE KEEP CLASHING THOUGHT-LESSLY ...
...AND YOU TELL YOURSELF, THAT'S JUST WHAT PEOPLE ARE LIKE...
BUT YOUR DAD'S A LETCH, SO HE JUST GETS INVOLVED WITH WHOEVER'S CONVENIENT.
SORRY, PUNPUN.
IS THIS BORING YOU?
YOU KNOW, I...
I JUST WANT TO TELL YOU ONE THING...
FIGHT ON, FIGHT ON!
Punpun just went with it.
"I get it, I get it, I totally get it!"
IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE TOTALLY PUNPUN!
YEAH, YOU TOTALLY GET IT?

FIGHT ON...
FIGHT ON.



WHOA!
WHAT?!
...HMMM
I FORGOT WHAT I WAS GOING TO SAY!

Punpun's dad seemed...

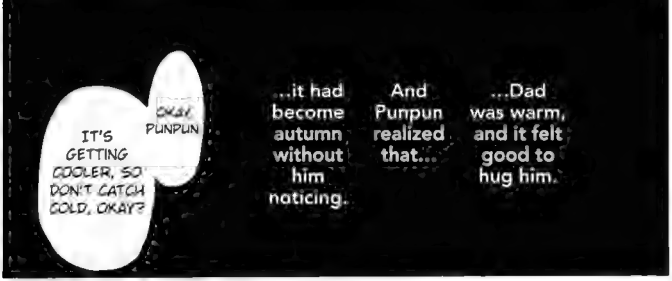
...a little more down than usual.

BACK THEN I IMAGINED THAT BY NOW I'D BE LIVING A RICH AND REWARDING LIFE SOMEWHERE ON A FARAWAY PLANET.
BUT NOW I THINK THE FUTURE IS SURPRISINGLY DULL.
I USED TO BE INTO SCI-FI WHEN I WAS YOUNGER.
YOU KNOW, LATELY YOUR DAD SPENDS ALL HIS TIME THINKING ABOUT THE UNIVERSE.

But of course.
YEAH...
WHAT? YOU FOUND PLANET PUNPUN WITH THE TELESCOPE?!
THAT'S VERY COOL! WILL YOU TAKE ME TOO?

THANK YOU...
YOUR OL' DAD'S NEVER BEEN SO HAPPY...!
OH... OH...
OOOH!

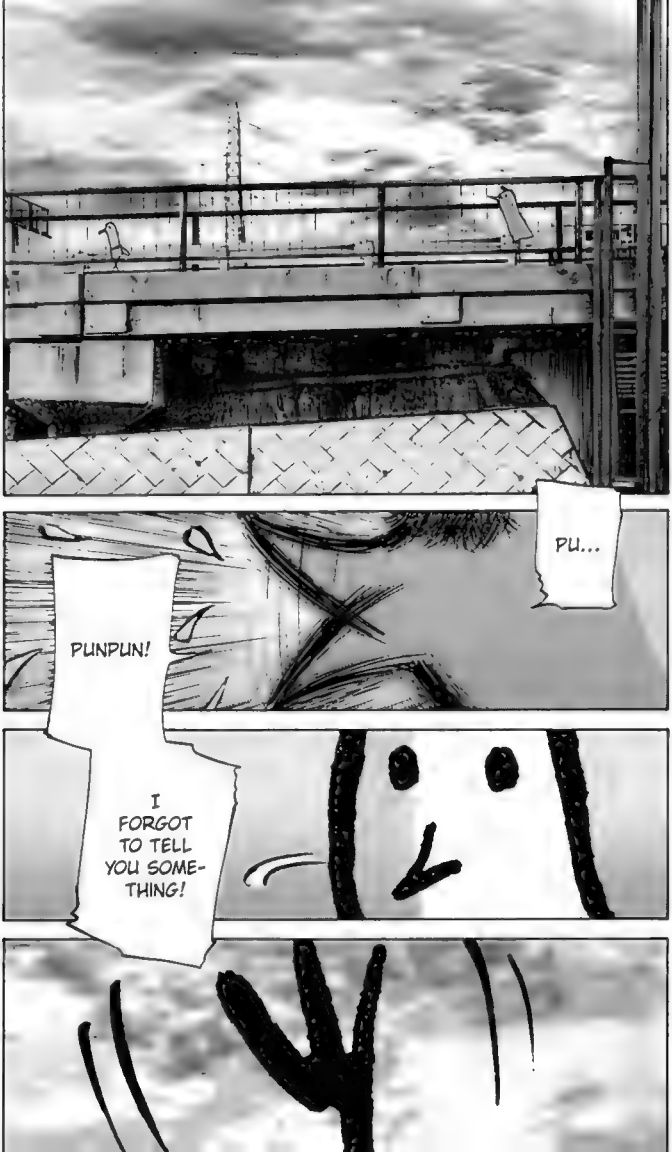
If Punpun's friends saw this, he would never live it down, but...


IT'S GETTING COOLER, SO DON'T CATCH COLD, OKAY?
OKAY, PUNPUN
...it had become autumn without him noticing.
And Punpun realized that...
...Dad was warm, and it felt good to hug him.

SO AFTER I SAY BYE, I'M GOING HOME.
...I CAN'T GET ANY CLOSER TO THE HOUSE THAN THIS...
YOU SEE...

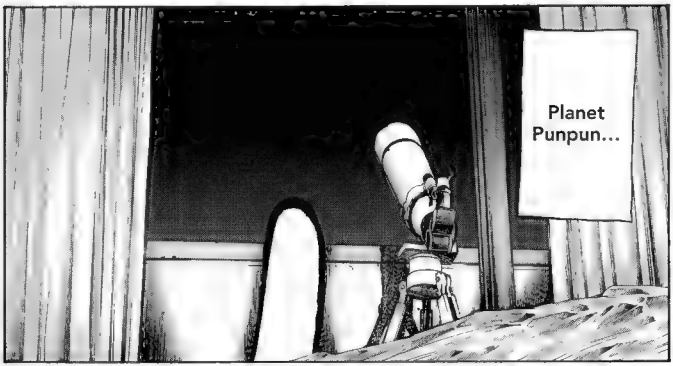
"Where?" Punpun asked.
THE TRUTH IS, I WAS CHOSEN TO BE A TEST PILOT FOR NASA.
TO AMERICA ...

IF SHE FOUND OUT I WAS WAITING FOR YOU AFTER SCHOOL, WE'D HAVE ANOTHER ARGUMENT! HA HA HA HA!
GO ON! GET GOING!
YOUR MOM MUST BE WORRIED!
...Punpun asked his dad.
"When will I see you again?"
At this, Punpun thought ...
"Liar."
WELL...
WE CAN SEE EACH OTHER WHENEVER WE WANT!

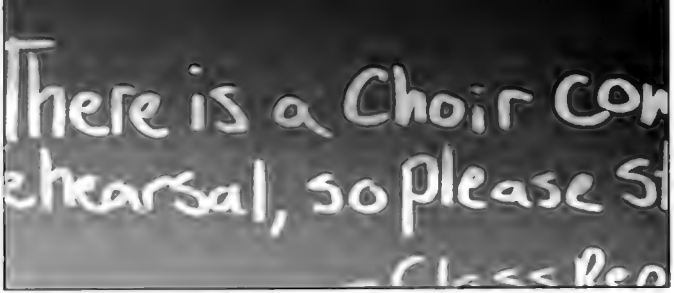

PU...
PUNPUN!
I FORGOT TO TELL YOU SOME-THING!

I LOVE YOU!

TO FILE FOR DIVORCE
Zzzz
Zzzz
Zzzz

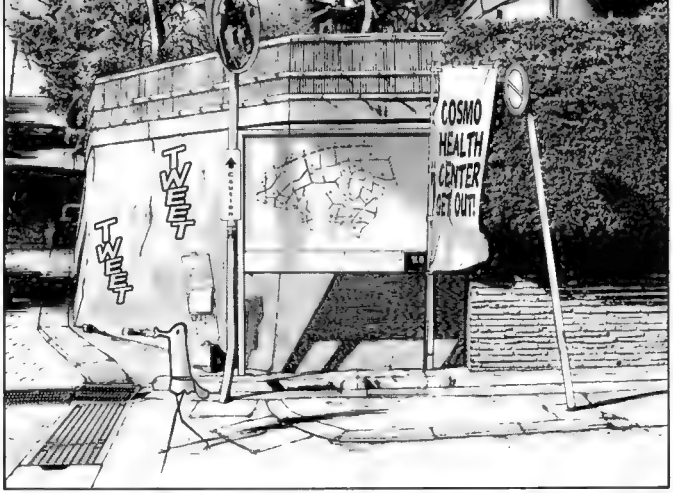

Planet
Punpun...

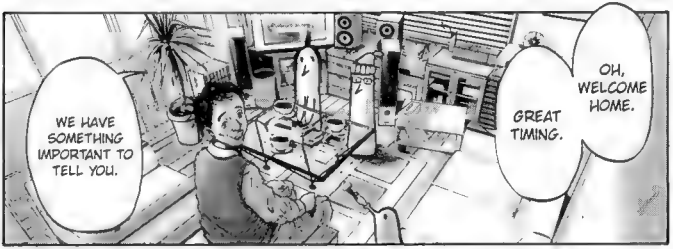
...was
gone.

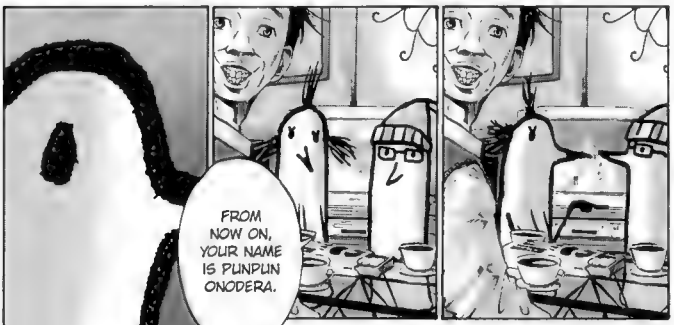

There is a Choir con
ehearsal, so please s

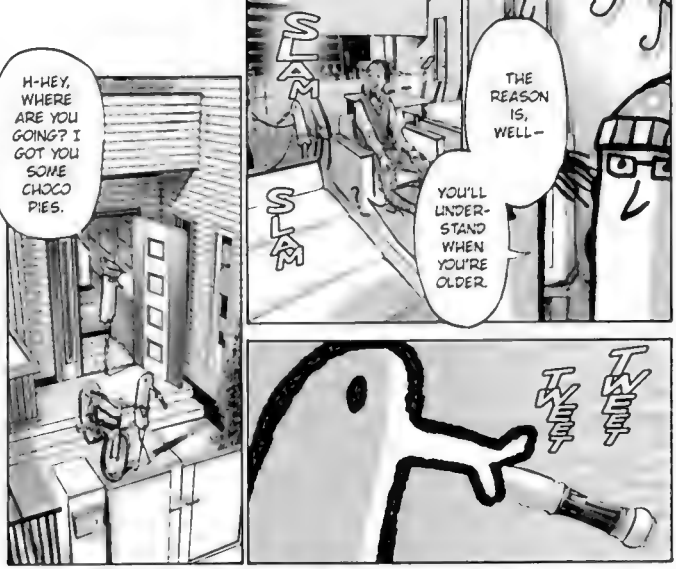
I WONDER IF HE WENT HOME?
HEY? WHERE'S FUMIYA?
HE...
...SEEMS A LITTLE DOWN LATELY.
YEAH.

Chapter 22


TWEET
TWEET
COSMO HEALTH CENTER GET OUT!

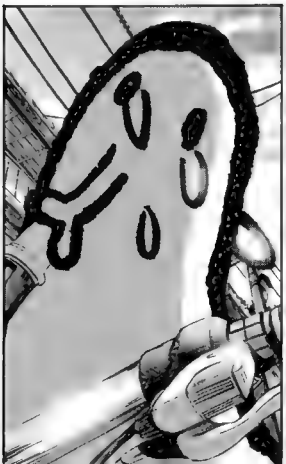

OH, WELCOME HOME.
GREAT TIMING.
WE HAVE SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO TELL YOU.

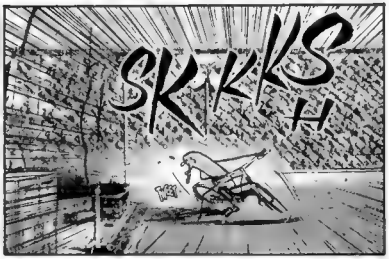

FROM NOW ON, YOUR NAME IS PUNPUN ONODERA.



Even Punpun had some grasp of what was going on!

Punpun thought about how no one could possibly understand what he was going through, and it felt like his heart was being squeezed.





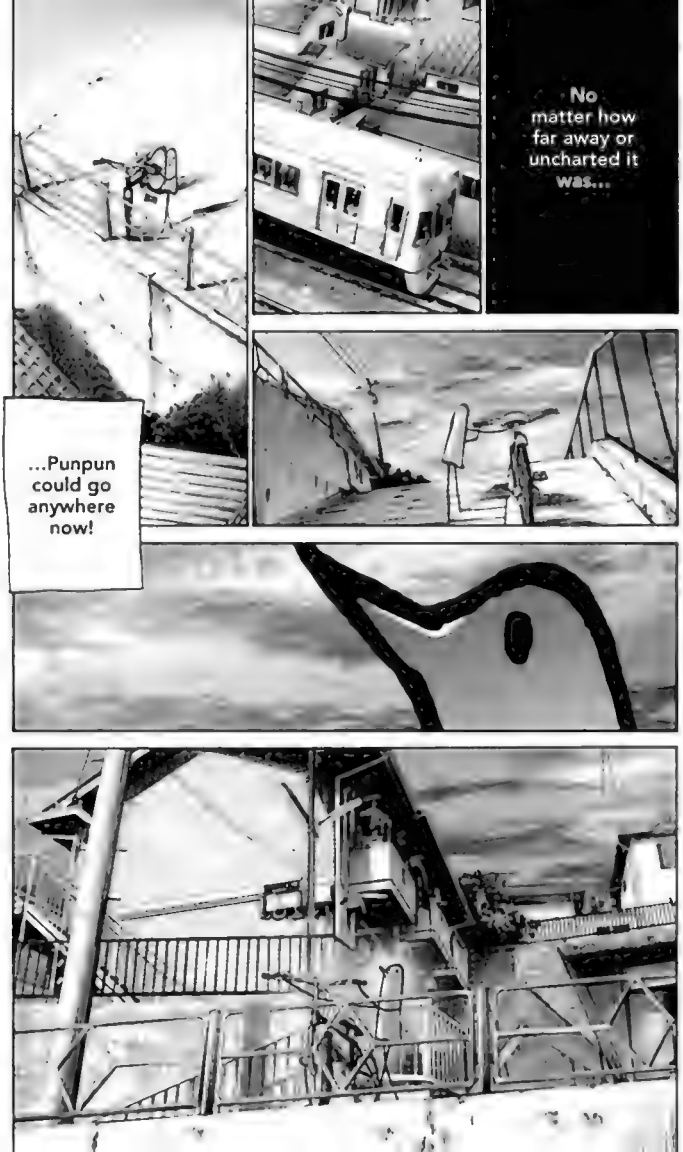
He was sick of it!

Always getting treated like a little kid...

CRASH
BANG

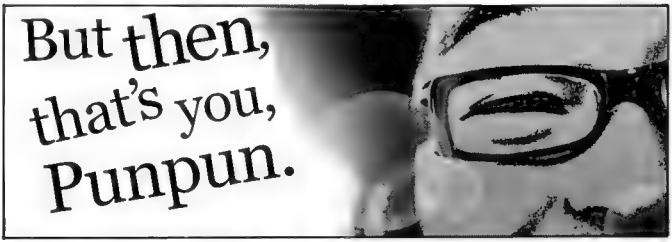
Punpun made a decision.

CENTRAL MARKET
He decided he would become a grown-up, starting today.
COSMO HEALTH CENTER
GET OUT!
Punpun wasn't afraid of anything anymore.

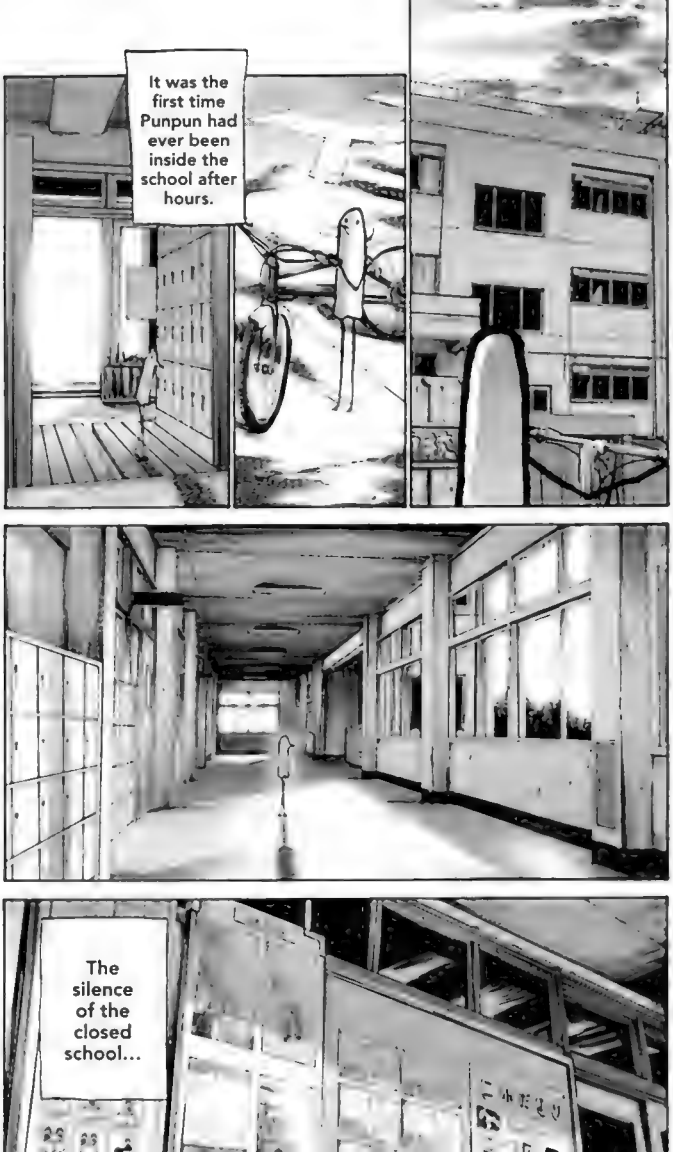

No matter how far away or uncharted it was...
...Punpun could go anywhere now!

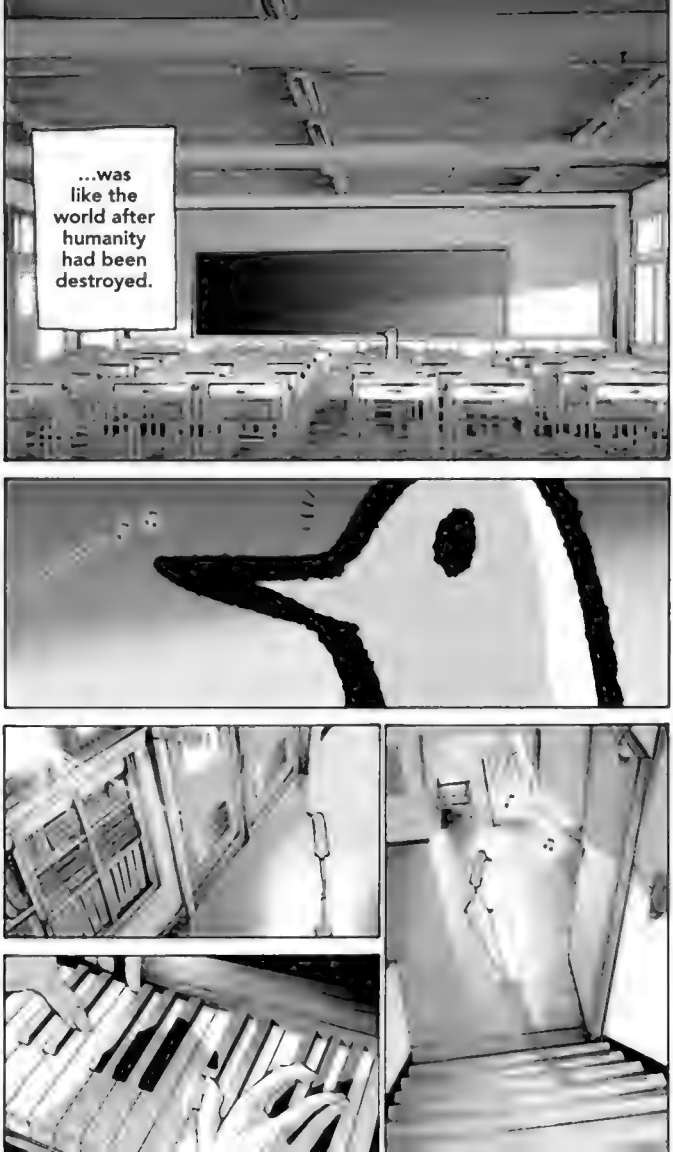
The world stretched far beyond what Punpun had ever imagined.

See, you're such a child.
Honestly, you thought about going home, right?


But then, that's you, Punpun.

"Shut up."
Oooh, scary.


It was the first time Punpun had ever been inside the school after hours.
The silence of the closed school...

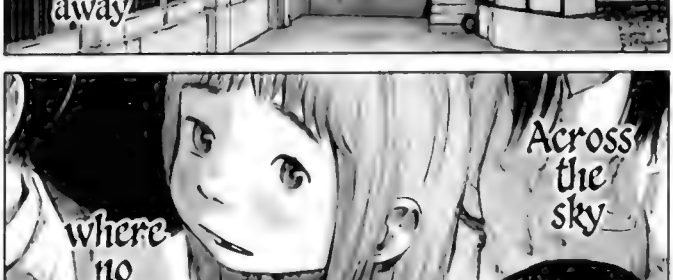

...was like the world after humanity had been destroyed.

If he had to feel this way...
...he'd have been better off being alone from the start.
Today, Punpun felt very much alone.

Today, the autumn light seemed very soft.
And if he stayed like that with his eyes closed...
...maybe he'd evaporate like water, and then he could fly wherever he wanted.
That's what Punpun thought.

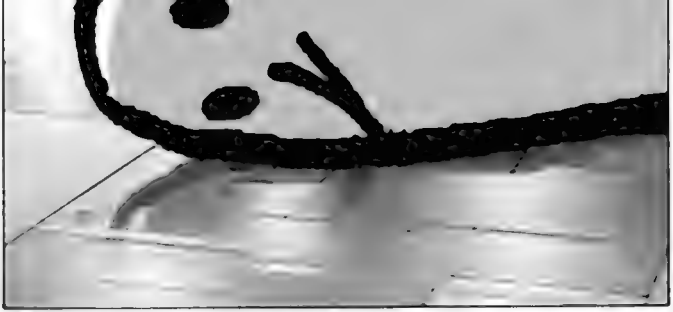
for
you
to
give
me
wings
If I
had one
wish
to come
true right
now, I'd
wish

I want to spread my wings
and fly far, far away


Across the sky
where no sadness dwells.

"TSUBASA O KUDASAI"
Lyrics: Makoto Yamaguchi
Composer: Kunihiko Murai
I want to spread my wings
and fly.

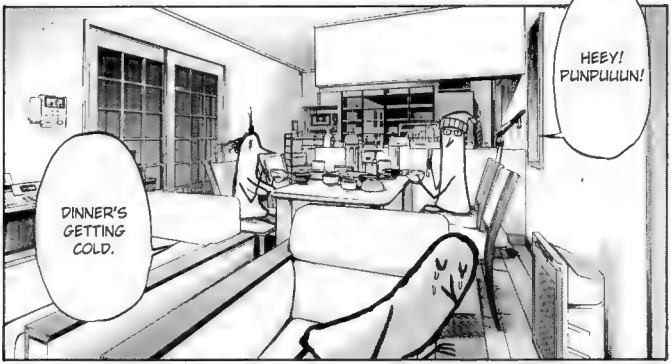
GOODNIGHT PUNPUN
Part Two
INIO ASANO



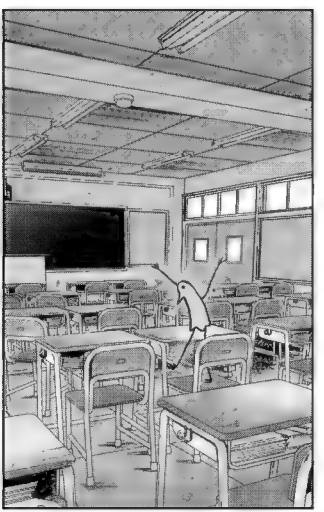
WELCOME HOME, PUNPUN.
YUICHI IS OUT LOOKING FOR YOU
WELL, I THOUGHT YOU'D BE HOME SOON, SO

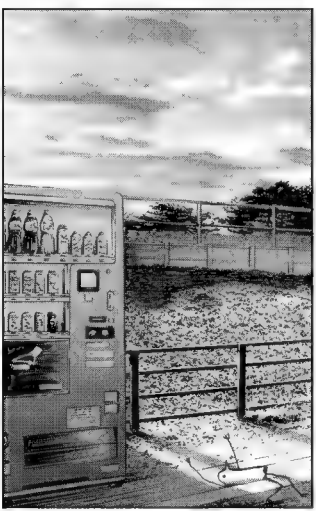
YOU ...!
PAT
DON'T LEAVE ME...
...ALONE.
Punpun...

...had no idea why, but the tears wouldn't stop.



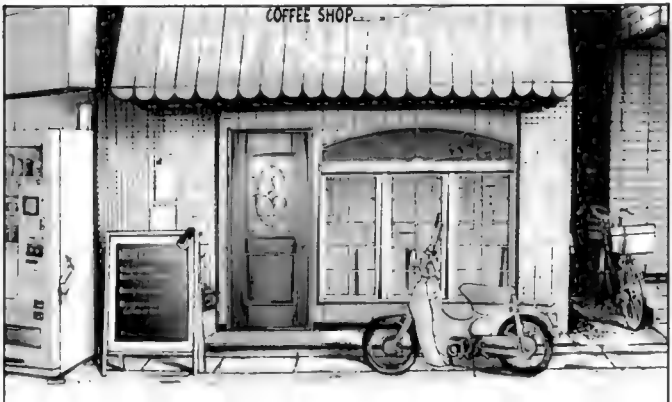
Goodnight, Punpun.





Chapter 23

PUTT
PUTT PUTT
PUTT
PUTT
PUTT.


COFFEE SHOP

OH, OVER HERE.
ALTHOUGH I *AM* THE ONLY ONE HERE.
I FOUND THIS PLACE RECENTLY.
IT'S COZY, DON'T YOU THINK?
THE LAST TIME I WAS HERE, I THINK IT WAS A RAMEN SHOP.
I WONDER WHEN THAT WAS...?
IT'S WHEN MY SISTER WAS IN THE MIDDLE OF HER DIVORCE AND THINGS WERE PRETTY CHAOTIC, SO A LITTLE OVER TWO YEARS AGO.
AHH, THE IMPERMANENCE OF THE WORLD AND THE QUICK PASSAGE OF TIME.
I NEVER THOUGHT WE'D BE ACQUAINTED THIS LONG.

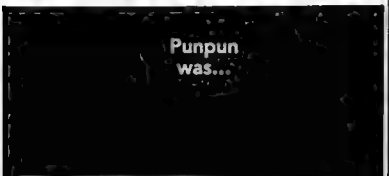
YUP, YUP!
WELL, WHATEVER THE REASON, YOU'RE ONE OF THE FEW FRIENDS I HAVE.
LET'S MAKE SURE WE STAY FRIENDS.
HA HA HA
HMMM, I'LL HAVE THE PASTA NAPOLI-TANA.
HOW ABOUT YOU, YUGAMI?
OKAY, TWO NAPOLI-TANAS.
SO, MY SISTER HAS SETTLED INTO HER PART-TIME JOB.
BUT SHE COMMUTES TO THE NEXT TOWN FOR APPEAR-ANCE'S SAKE.
AND SHE'S TELLING THIS WEIRD LIE ABOUT OWNING AN APARTMENT BUILDING IN SETAGAYA.

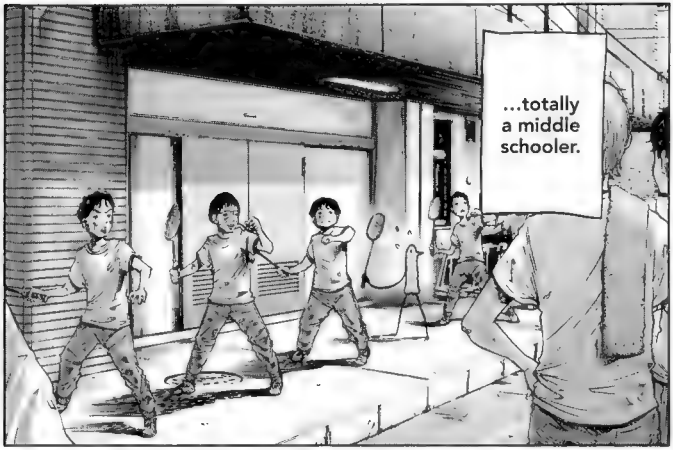
HE'S DOING SOME AFTER-SCHOOL CLUB THING NOW.
PUNPUN?
HE'S STILL A GOOD KID.
BUT I GUESS TIME RESOLVES ALL.
THINGS HAVE REALLY SETTLED DOWN.
YEAH... IT WAS REALLY DARK FOR A WHILE THERE, AND WE WERE ALL GROPING AROUND.
NO WAY.
THERE AREN'T MANY ECCENTRICS WHO WOULD FALL FOR A 33-YEAR-OLD PART-TIMER.
GIRL-FRIEND?
ME?
THANK YOU FOR WAIT-

GEEZ!
IF THIS WERE AMERICA, THERE'D BE A LAWSUIT COMING!
OH...!
CRASH
SPLAT
I-I'M SO SORRY!
I'LL CLEAN IT UP IMMEDIATELY!
WAIT ...
YOU'RE FROM...

MIDDLE
SCHOOL 2

FEATHER JUNKIES

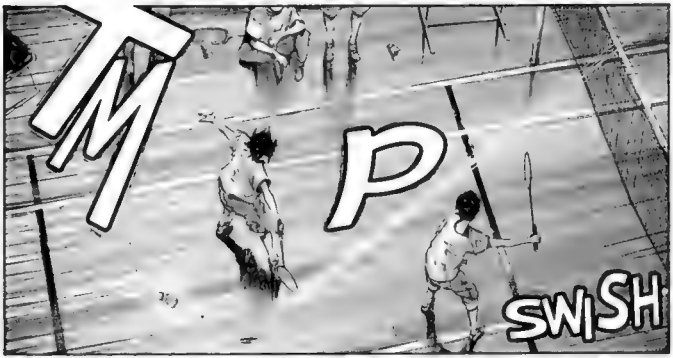

Punpun
was...


...totally a middle schooler.

HEY, FIRST-YEARS!
YOU GUYS ARE OUT OF SYNC!
OKAY, ONE, TWO, ONE, TWO.

YAGUCHI...
...WE'RE BORED OF PRACTICE SWINGS...
WHEN CAN WE GET INTO THE GYM AND HAVE A MATCH?
WELL, WE'LL TALK TO THE COACH ABOUT IMPROVING THE OLD TRADITIONS THIS YEAR.
BUT THAT SAID, THE BASICS ARE IMPORTANT. SO FOR NOW, JUST DO PRACTICE SWINGS.
YOU GUYS...
...IF WE'D SAID THAT TO UPPERCLASSMEN WHEN WE WERE FIRST-YEARS, WE'D HAVE GOTTEN THE CRAP KICKED OUT OF US.
BUT KOMATSU IS PRACTICING WITH THE OLDER KIDS–
THAT'S NOT FAIR...
H-HEEEY, KOMATSU IS DIFFERENT, OKAY?
TRY BEING ON THE RECEIVING END OF HIS SMASHES! HE'S SERIOUSLY A DEMON.

But... Punpun had joined the badminton club because Komatsu had said, "It looks like it'll be fun."

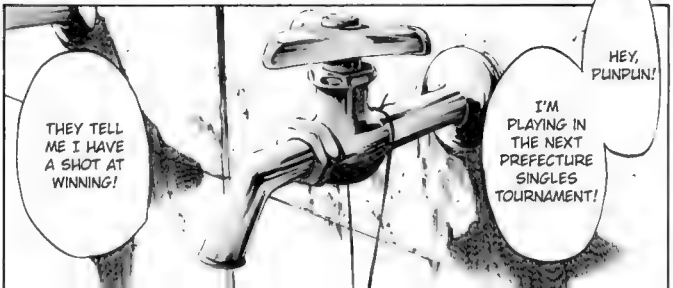


...but he decided to act like it didn't matter.

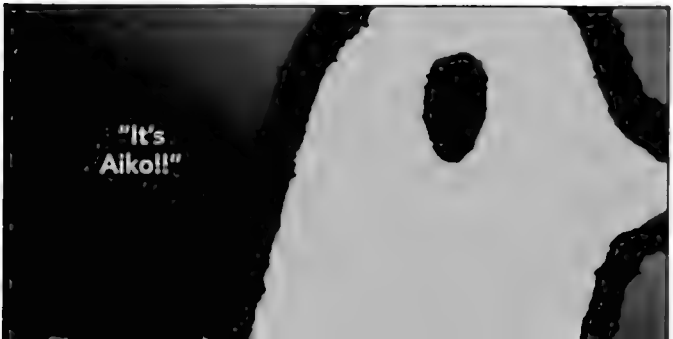
...and Punpun found it hard to take...

...without seeming to try...

...Komatsu improved...



OKAAAAY, WE'RE DONE FOR TODAY!
FIRST-YEARS, START CLEANING UP!
I HEAR YAGUCHI HAS A HUGE DICK.
SEROUSLY ?!
SUSUAK
SUSUAK
SUSUAK


"It's Aiko!!"

HEY, AIKO!
I HAVE A MEETING, SO CAN YOU WAIT A BIT?

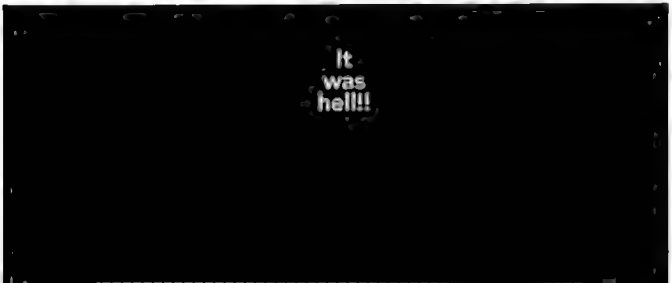
Punpun...

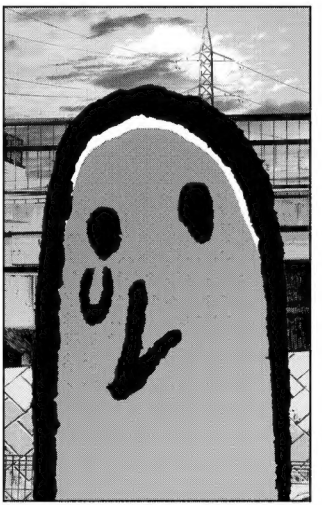
...hadn't spoken to Aiko once in the last two years.

Their eyes never even met.

But still...
But still...

...loved Aiko
But still, Punpun...


It was hell!!!



GOODNIGHT PUNPUN INIO ASANO
Part Two

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Satsuki Sato
CG ASSISTANT: Hisashi Saito
COOPERATION: Kumatsuto
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INIO ASANO, a bona fide earthling, was born in Ibaraki, Japan, in 1980. In 2001, his short story "Uchu kara Konnichiwa" (Hello from Outer Space) won the first Sunday GX Rookie Prize. Later, GX published his series *Subarashi Sekai*, available in English from VIZ Media as *What a Wonderful World!* His other works include *Hikari no Machi* (City of Light), *Nijigahara Holograph* and *Umibe no Onna no Ko* (A Girl on the Shore), as well as *solanin*, also available from VIZ Media.

GOODNIGHT PUNPUN

Volume 1

VIZ Signature Edition

Story and Art by INIO ASANO

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